



Window on Jordan

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

WHERE TO spend the summer holiday? This is the \$64,000 question that crops up every year as students finish their exams and set off on holiday. June and July are considered an endless headache for many families who don't know where and how to keep their children occupied.

Many parents complain that their children prefer to be idle, roaming the streets rather than joining summer clubs or other organized activities for juniors. Motivated by the desire to get rid of their nuisance children, many parents encourage them to find

simple jobs.

Their modest wage can contribute to the family income. "At least they can save some money and put it towards their personal needs, such as clothes or stationary at the beginning of each school year," says a father of five. Parents openly say that they think vacation work prepares their children for life and teaches them how to be independent.

Parents don't really make their children work just for the money, but to keep them off the streets. Realizing that many problems arise when youths get together, families argue that sending their children off to work is the best thing they can do.

However, many argue that public, private and other social institutions should do their bit by organizing different kinds of activities to keep school pupils busy over the summer.

Summer activities could include sport, tourist trips to archeological and historical sites and workshops to help students improve their reading and writing, for example.

So far this year, parents are content. World Cup matches are a godsend to young people who are currently glued to the television sets watching soccer.

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Photo: Mahmud Shamsat

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly



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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Wheeling and dealing as press draft gains momentum

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

DEBATE OVER the draft press law is heating up this week in parliament. The government is defending the draft as a necessary means of organizing the profession, but the press regard the law as a gag on freedom of expression, reminiscent of the era of martial law.

In the earlier extraordinary session, 46 deputies voted in favour of pushing the draft through to the National Guidance Committee (NGC), with just 18 voting for the draft's return to government.

Meanwhile the NGC face a dilemma. The government introduced the Temporary Press and Publications Law of 1997 in the absence of Parliament. Although the Higher Court subsequently threw it out saying it was unconstitutional, the Committee is now effectively dealing with two draft laws.

"To solve this critical situation, we could add an extra article to the 1997 draft stipulating the rejection of the 1997 draft and any previous laws," said Mahmud Kharabsheh, spokesperson for the NGC.

Lower House deputies meanwhile were surprised to receive a file from the PPD director containing what he referred to as "negative examples from sensational newspapers."

The NGC then asked the Speaker of the House to send a letter to the prime minister to curb any attempts to influence the decision of deputies.

"The only person that can address Parliament is the prime minister or one of his cabinet ministers—not just any government employee," said Lower House Deputy Nayer Moulid. "I want to ask the PPD director, how many cases from the numerous examples of misuses, have been found guilty and were sentenced—I think very few" Moulid, a former director



Kharabsheh

of the PPD explained.

In a meeting held last Saturday, NGC members approved mechanisms for dealing with the draft. "The NGC has decided to open the door to all those concerned, and allow them to present their views in writing and then we will meet them," said Deputy Kharabsheh.

Invitations have been sent to former ministers of Information, the chief editors of dailies and weeklies, political parties, and specialized newspapers to meet with members of the NGC this Saturday.

Next Tuesday, the NGC will meet with presidents of the press, doctors, and pharmacists associations, columnists, and human rights organizations, secretary generals of political parties, and a long list of other experts and those interested in the field.

Some observers regard the decision by the majority of deputies to vote the draft through to the NGC—rather than rejecting it immediately—as a move to prevent it finding its way to the Upper House for further discussion and possible modification. If the majority of deputies still refused the draft after this, a joint session of the two chambers would need to be held.

The government already has 40 guaranteed votes and will have no difficulty wooing a further 21 deputies. Alternatively, the government may try to implement another temporary law at the end of this extraordinary session, while the controversial remarks made on television recently by Deputy Ahmad Oeidi Abbadi that "national unity is just a lie," take center stage.

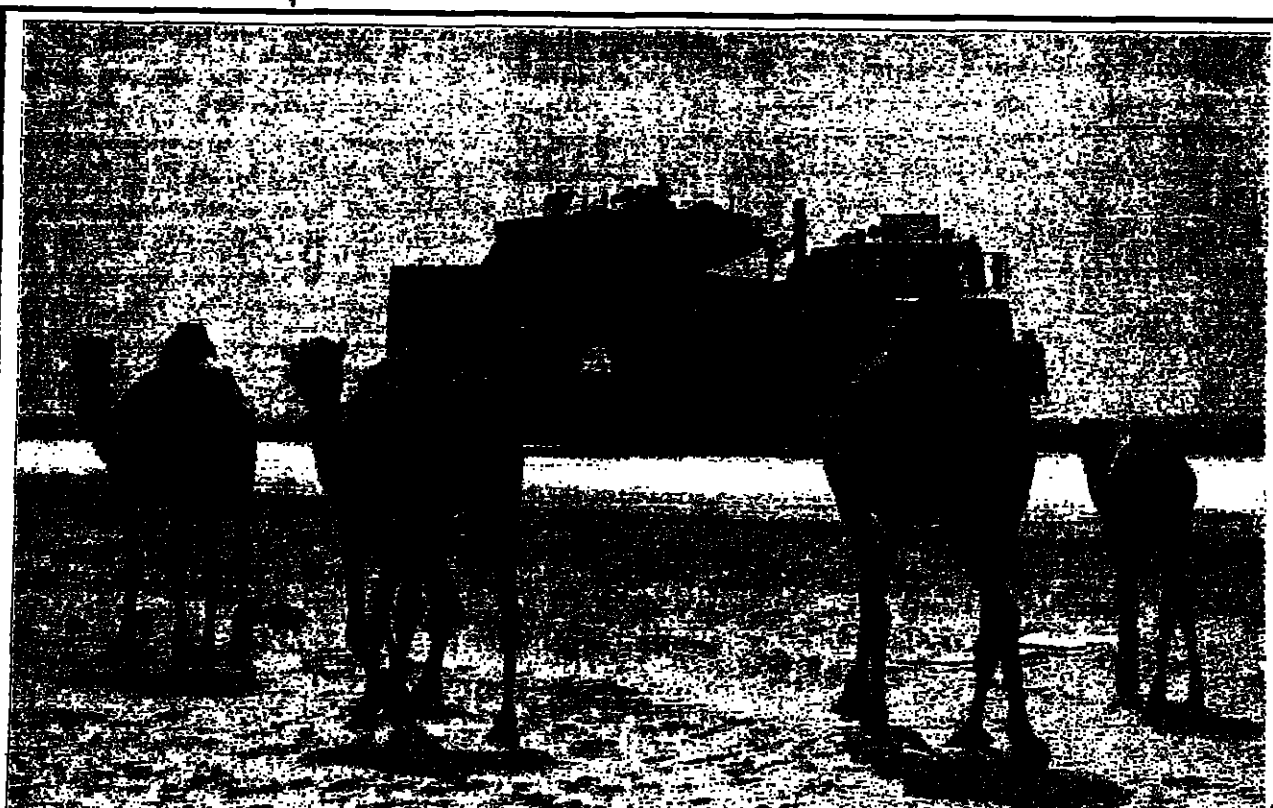
Ultimately, the draft will be endorsed, but the date depends on the Royal Decree. "If the King issued a decree to dissolve this extraordinary session at the end of this month, the draft will be postponed," Moulid said, adding that the draft will be ratified only if the Chamber of Deputies is still convening.

Another issue currently concerning journalists is the draft Press Association Law. The parliamentary legal committee have finished discussing its articles.

Deputies discussed the recommendations provided by the NGC in yesterday's session. One of the articles stipulated that new elections have to take place in April, which means the new elected Press Association Council will enjoy its position for only another nine months, instead of two years.

Basic amendments included increasing the mandate of the council from two years to three, and increasing its number to 10 members elected directly by the general assembly, without any sectional divisions valid in the present law.

Apart from these two laws, the House also has 55 other draft laws to debate. Twelve have been endorsed and the rest are expected to be discussed in the coming days.



A flat-bed truck carrying a US M-1A Abrams tank passes a group of camels in the Saudi Arabian desert. US troops killed ten camels and injured 10 more when a herd strayed onto a live-fire range near the Iraqi border in Kuwait last week.

AFP photo

Arab leaders show unity against Israeli plans for Jerusalem

By Star Staff Writer

A BREAKTHROUGH in Arab diplomacy. This is what observers are saying about the Arab mini-summit held in Cairo earlier this week. The meeting of His Majesty King Hussein, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is being hailed as a success in so far as it marks the beginning of a united Arab front to deal with the Israeli onslaught on the city of Jerusalem.

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat has labeled the summit as "part of the preparation to hold a comprehensive Arab summit." Indeed such an event has been long awaited, with experts agreeing that this is the best way to deal with Israeli intransigence—as a counter-offensive to the "Judaization" of Jerusalem.

"The preparation for an Arab summit should be deep and precise, and must find mechanisms to execute policies before taking a stand—this would give legitimacy to Arabs in front of the world," Erekat stated.

The mini-summit did at least demonstrate Arab resolve, both to the Israeli leadership and to the Americans. "The leaders assert their absolute rejection of the Judaization of Jerusalem which the Israeli government launched on

News Analysis

21 June, and demand the abolition of the project immediately and that no measures are to be taken to implement it on the ground," the three leaders stated in a joint communiqué after the talks.

King Hussein said that Jerusalem is one of the most dangerous and critical issues at the moment. "Jerusalem concerns us all, not just the Palestinians and Arabs, but Muslims and the world; we have a role to play in stopping any changes on the ground."

summit is being seen as a signal to the United States, Europe, and Russians to do something about what is regarded as Israeli obstinacy.

The three leaders at the Cairo meeting wanted a clear response from the United States about the fate of the initiative, before deciding on a future course of action.

Experts agree that the summit has left "a window of opportunity," to give time to the Americans to persuade the Israelis to accept their 13.5 percent proposal to withdraw from the West Bank.

But this "window of opportunity" is likely to have a time limit, which will fizzle out if there is no progress or good will on the part of Israelis.

Nabeel Abu Rudineh, an advisor of Chairman Arafat expressed the following view. "The three-way summit has sent a clear message that the Americans won't wait long for the American administration to reactivate the peace process, and this is the last chance for American mediation."

However, Israel continues to blame the Palestinians. Meanwhile they continue to build settlements and now seek to expand the powers of Jerusalem into the neighboring region. Israel only criticized the summit saying it aimed at putting pressure on the Israeli government.

"The Cairo summit was called to...extract concessions from us but it will not work," said David Bar-Ilan, spokesman for the Israeli Prime Minister. "The Palestinians would do best to resume the direct negotiations that they have boycotted for 15 months," he added.

The recently announced Israeli plan on Jerusalem

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Shura Council elections convene in secret

By Ilham Sadeq

Star Staff Writer

THE ELECTIONS of the Muslim Brotherhood's Shura Council are expected to start today (Thursday). It is reported that the group, considered the largest religious party in Jordan, is facing divisions and internal conflicts, apparent by its decision to boycott the 1997 parliamentary elections. However, some members still chose to put themselves forward, violating the Brotherhood's consensus to boycott the elections. Those members have since been subjected to penalties, with some being dismissed from the group, which has resulted in today's apparent disunity.

However, this is not a view shared by the Muslim Brotherhood, whose spokesman, Jameel Abu Baker, told *The Star* that, "the press continues to magnify our problems; differences of opinion are a healthy sign for any organization. It's true some of us have different points of view, but we all share the same principles, and work for the welfare of the group, as a unit with one objective." The Brotherhood spokesman continued to say, "the climate for this year's polls for the Shura Council does look quieter than usual, but some newspapers have mistakenly seen this as a sign of division."

The Shura Council—comprising 45 members—represents the Brotherhood in all the government elections and are held every four years. Analysts tend to classify

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Mickey doesn't get a look-in at Disney's new theme park

Disney goes 'virtual' with latest theme park

By Sandra Carpenter

IF YOU have ever dreamed of designing and riding your own roller coaster, pay a visit to DisneyQuest in Florida. The five-storey building is being described as a "theme park in a box," and there, alongside computer games which suck you into a parallel universe, is a "virtual" roller coaster which you can programme to do anything you want.

When Disney was previewing the centre—it opened on June 19—I hesitated: my joystick skills are almost nonexistent, and this is cutting-edge technology. But a group of computer buffs promised to rescue me if needed, attendants at each stage explained carefully what was happening and the building was air-conditioned and shady after the Orlando sun.

DisneyQuest is divided into four zones: Explore, Create, Score and Replay. In Score, we were soon donning virtual-reality helmets to fight off 3D demons with our light-sabres, and rescuing earth colonists on a planet under attack by aliens. We tried varied adventures in Explore, some woven around familiar characters such as Aladdin and Hercules. But the design-your-own roller coaster—the ride everyone wanted to try—was waiting in Create.

You sit at a computer screen and, guided by prompts ("Your average speed is 4 miles an hour. Do you want to go faster?"), create the ride of your dreams. All kinds of bends, gradients and

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ARAB BANK

On the Occasion of
The Prophet's Birthday

Arab Bank is honoured to convey to

HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN

and to

the Arab & Islamic Nations

Its felicitations and best wishes

Dureid Laham

A rogue with a conscience

By Ibtisam Awadat

Star Staff Writer
 ACTOR DUREID Laham is a fascinating character. His persona is only matched by his theatrical versatility. Without being typecast he whisked from one role to another, playing the lovable rogue, the downbeaten, and now the vanguard of children.

Laham, alias Ghawar Al Tousse, alias Abu Al Hannah, alias Wadood is known all over the Arab world. Indeed his characters have long come to identify the hopes, fears, frustrations, guilt and happiness of the common man in the street.

Dureid Laham is all these complex characters. There are two extremes: Ghawar Al Tousse, the character in the hit Syrian television series of the early 1970s was a

rascal who everybody loved to hate. Ordinary folk identified with his antics, pranks and trickery. The character was able to get away with everything without being caught, and was still loved by people.

And this is where subtlety comes in. Underneath the surface Ghawar Al Tousse was a man of principle who refused to accept aggression on any one of his neighbors.

At the other extreme is his latest television character creation—Abu Al Hannah. While not everybody liked the almost pathetic Abu Al Hannah, it was starkly realistic in its representation: a self-defeated Arab man of the '90s, unsure of himself, a good for nothing, criticizing social attitudes but lacking the will to change them.

The man behind these characters was born in the early 1950s. The youngest of 10 brothers and sisters, he grew up in one of the ramshackle districts of Damascus but managed to gain a Chemistry degree and go on to become a university lecturer. He remembers these days vividly. "I studied by the light of a kerosene lamp. When electricity invaded our houses, I remember how I was totally fascinated by it all—just switch on the light. It was magic."

Life was not easy for the family. His father used to trek to Lebanon to bring large quantities of coal on the back of his animal then return home to sell it. His mother also worked to sustain the family by making and selling clothes.

It was at university that the young Dureid developed his love of theater. During his studies he joined a theatrical group. "I remember that most of its members were from scientific faculties—they found it the only outlet to speak out and express their emotions," Dureid told *The Star*.

After his hit television series *Hammam Al Hanna* in the early '70s, Laham went on to the stage. His two plays, *Gorbah* (Entrangement) and *Kasak Ya Wanan* (Toast to the nation), were another turning point. The plays sought to deliver a critical message to every Arab citizen and especially to leaders, about the decadence and the humiliation of the Arab nation. He called for solidarity and one nation.

Laham was later to say, "National action does not only mean engaging in fighting. I believe even the baker who honestly bakes bread to sell to the people is carrying out a national task." This is why he sees his works as a "national duty" and not as purely political.

As an Arab nation we are qualified to lead the world, all the facilities are available but our position is really unacceptable," Laham continues. In his latest television production, *Abu Al Hannah* is portrayed as a character who is the incarnation of Arab weakness.

"In *Abu Al Hannah*, I was accused of leaving the national works and diving into the details of daily life," Laham adds, "this is something I totally reject," the 65 year-old argues, saying *Abu Al Hannah* is very much a part of his national works.

Today, there is another turning point in the life of the actor. Laham has been diverting his attention to children's rights.

"We have to believe that children represent the future. Three years ago I heard nothing about children's rights or their congress, but today the attention



Laham

is increasing," says Laham who has been nominated as the Unicef Ambassador of Children in Syria.

In spite of decades of defeat, Laham still believes in one united nation. In his works with children he seeks to close the gap between Arab children which occurred during the Gulf War.

During the opening of the 13th session of the annual Children's Congress taking place in Amman this week, Laham proved the vital link between Iraqi and Kuwaiti children. "I am so happy with the results. Children understand that the war is a process only carried out by older people," Laham continued. "We aimed at studying the consequences and not the causes and I think the result of the dialogue was very good."

Laham, himself a father and grandfather, stressed the importance of creating bridges of dialogue with children. "I ask parents to listen to their children's questions and not to underestimate them, [these questions] are most of the time philosophical ones," Laham described his relations with his sons and grandsons as a "defined friendship." I play with my grandsons and consider them my friends but do not remove the principle of respect. ■

For the Record

King visits tomb of King Talal
 AMMAN (Petra)—His Majesty King Hussein accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah Bin Al Hussein visited on Tuesday the tomb of the late King Talal, on the 26th anniversary of his death. His Majesty recited verses from the Holy Quran and laid a wreath of the tomb. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hassan accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Rashid Bin Al Hassan also visited the tomb.

Jordan participates in Islamic conference

AMMAN (Petra)—The Chief Justice and His Majesty King Hussein's Advisor for Islamic Affairs, Sheikh Izzidin Al Khattib Altamimi, returned to Amman after taking part in the 10th Conference of the Higher Council for Islamic Affairs held recently in Egypt. The conference discussed a number of issues relating to Islam; its stand on the globalization in politics, the dominance of economics in today's world, and the effect of scientific progress on religion.

Prince Hassan meets with Saudi minister

AMMAN (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Saturday received the visiting Saudi Minister of External Trade Dr. Usama Faqeh. The discussions focused on means of developing fraternal relations between the two countries, particularly in economic, trade and investment fields. Prince Hassan stressed the necessity to take measures for the establishment of an Arab trade zone, enabling Arab countries to deal with the international trade blocks. The Crown Prince affirmed also the necessity of facilitating trade exchange between Arab countries, particularly in the field of commodities and services. Prince Hassan pointed out the importance of coordinating a common stand before the coming session of the World Trade Organization.

Police Chief meets UN Delegation

AMMAN (Petra)—Director of the Public Security Department Major General Nasuh Muhyeddin met a UN delegation led by Mr Peterson on Tuesday. Major General Muhyeddin said Jordan was one of the first countries to respond positively to the call for greater cooperation between international peace keeping forces. Jordan believes strongly in the importance of peace, as a way of preserving people's accomplishments and for providing a favorable atmosphere for development. The UN delegation is currently on a visit to Jordan to get a first hand look at the Jordanian police cadre training courses. If they meet the required standard, Jordan can join the international police force operating under UN command. Mr Peterson paid tribute to the high efficiency of the Jordanian police units working under the UN. Jordan compares favorably with other countries, and comes second in terms of the number of police cadres operating alongside the international peace keeping forces, Mr Peterson said.

Seminar on co-existence in the Middle East

AMMAN (Petra)—A seminar on co-existence in the Middle East opened in Al Sinur on Sunday with 30 participants from Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Tunisia and Israel, together with representatives from some European countries. The two-week long seminar—organised by the Danish Foreign Ministry in cooperation with the World College for People—aims to discuss possible means of enhancing peaceful coexistence among the inhabitants of the Middle East.

Un approves more Jordan exports to Iraq

AMMAN (Petra)—The United Nations Sanctions Committee has approved 11 more contracts to export Jordanian products to Iraq under the UN oil-for-food deal with Iraq. Jordan's Industry and Trade Ministry said in a statement today that the contracts, amounting to \$6.83 million, include Jordanian exports of medicine, medical equipment, table salt, photocopying machines and paper. The latest UN approval brings to \$295 million the total amount of Jordanian exports to Iraq since the oil-for-food deal was reached between the United Nations and Iraq in December 1996. Under the deal, Iraq is allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to purchase badly needed food and medicine under strict UN supervision. Iraq, once Jordan's main trading partner, has been living under international sanctions since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990. The ministry said the UN Sanctions Committee, which supervises the embargo, has so far approved 98.7 percent of all contracts Jordan had submitted to be allowed to export goods to Iraq.



Dureid Laham in one of his famous roles

Making it through the summer

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But the problem will only resurface when the Jewish population of the city by some 30,000. It has been condemned by Arab leaders, Britain and the United States. Egypt has described the move as provocative to the Arab world.

The continued freeze in negotiations caused by Israeli obstinacy, has created a dangerous situation on the ground which is becoming more explosive because of Israel's plans," the Palestinian National Authority cabinet said in a statement last week.

The Palestinians, in the meantime have achieved what could be only regarded as a solid measure of success on the international stage. The General Assembly of the UN voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to upgrade the status of the Palestinian UN observer's delegation, giving it rights more like those of a member state. ■

Arab leaders show unity

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the candidates according to their declared stances and opinion on certain issues. Unidentified sources indicate that the new elections will be contested by three groups: doves, hawks and moderates. However, Mr Abu Baker argues, "such divisions do not necessarily mean that we differ in our overall aims. Reports of an internal crisis or conflict are baseless and untrue."

Despite these assurances the whole election process is being conducted in a top secret manner. A list of names has been reported, representing all the three main groups, but no-one can be sure of its validity. For instance, among the mentioned candidates is said to be Mr Abdullatif Arabiyat, general secretary of the Islamic Action Front. However, when *The Star* telephoned him he denied the news, describing it as groundless and merely press talk. ■



Palestinian band members participate in a parade to Jerusalem's Old City on the occasion of Moslem Prophet Mohammad's 1418th birthday, 6 July

Disney goes virtual with latest theme park

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corkscrews are available. Then comes the bonus: you swipe the finished product on to an electronic card, and go to a 360 degree pitch-and-roll simulator which will read the card and let you actually experience your ride. The swoops, turns and lurches are all gut-wrenchingly reproduced. The more reckless among us had programmed in loop-the-loops, and after hanging upside down in a harness came out looking rather green (A note of caution: in the simulator, you are on view to other visitors).

However, you could also design a ride gentle enough for a nervous child, so no one had to feel excluded; and again,

attendants were on hand for advice.

The centre is aimed at all ages, and 40-or-so somethings could spend an hour swamped with nostalgia in the Replay zone, trying arcade classics such as Pacman and Space Invaders.

Back in Create, they could morph their own computer image into whatever took their fancy (and get a print of the results), create personalized stickers or an animation cell, and even design a toy from on-screen components (highly popular with the youngest visitors, especially as the finished product can be bought afterwards). There is also a 150ft slide which makes a short cut

through two floors, and megacalorie cheesecakes in the refreshment area to boost flagging energy levels.

Emerging some three hours later, the computer experts were still enthusing about the roller coaster, and saying they had never seen anything this advanced before. "It's a theme park without any of the drawbacks. It doesn't take up acres of space and you don't have to wait for a fine day," said one. "I just hope the queues don't get too long." If they do, Disney won't mind. A second centre will open in Chicago next year, and more are to follow in the US. ■

Financial Times Syndication

Concert tour celebrating 400 years of opera hits Amman

AN OPERA evening was held in Amman last Sunday to celebrate the 400th anniversary of this elevated

style of singing. The concert was performed by renowned artists from the Metropolitan Opera. The

National Music Conservatory presented "Ambassadors of Opera & Concert Worldwide", under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, at L'Olivier restaurant, Abdoun.

The concert was a part of a worldwide tour which has taken them to several Arab cities such as Dubai, Doha, Bahrain and Cairo. Opera lovers enjoyed segments of famous operas such as Puccini's *La Boheme*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Gershwin's Progy* and *Bess* and excerpts from musicals by Andrew Lloyd Webber. ■

Second International Leadership Program opened by H.M. Queen Noor

AMMAN (Petra)—Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein opened the 2nd International Leadership Program at the University of Jordan on Saturday.

Her Majesty delivered a speech in which she stressed that the International Leadership Academy and the participants in its meetings represent an innovative venture to promote dynamic, inspiring and effective leadership for the 21st century, forging new generations of leaders who are able to address the world's complex challenges. "These principles are very familiar to us in Jordan, for our land and people have been shaped by five thousand years of history, at one of the world's most strategic, geographic and cultural crossroads," the Queen said. Her Majesty also spoke about the First International Leadership meeting which was held last year and brought together well over 100 future leaders from some 64 countries who all learned from each other, as well as from 40 distinguished speakers. "Through these encounters, as well as a study tour to Palestine, Israel and Egypt, the programme focused on leadership skills and attitudes, and conflict resolutions," she added.

Queen Noor said that this Summer's program will continue to focus on a full spectrum of issues ranging from challenges facing the UN to constructive methods for the peaceful resolution of disputes.



H.M. Queen Noor opening the International Leadership program at the University of Jordan

Her Majesty said that in the five decades since the founding of the United Nations, the traditional concerns of international leaders—peace and security, have become much more closely identified with the

issues of social and economic development. "Today's primary threats to international peace and stability are not so much from conflict ideologies, as was the case forty years ago, but rather human want, social turbulence and growing economic disparities," the Queen pointed out. Queen Noor said, "that the new world needs leaders who can develop local net-

works and tap into growing ones; leaders—who while faithful to the fundamental ideals and principles of the United Nations—are able to forge new means to achieve them." We need leaders who appreciate and understand the crucial and direct relationship between sustainable development, participatory decision-making, and world peace. ■

The Star

Telephone: 5664153

Fax: 5667170

E-mail: star@nets.com.jo

JORDAN

WEEK



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Elections

President of the Jordan Press Association Self Al Sharief was reelected last week. In elections held at the Chamber of Industry, Mr Sharief won by a landslide. He received 185 votes in the first ballot. Both Khalid Mahadin and Bassem Sakajha received 58 votes and 47 votes respectively. 306 journalists took part in the elections.



Al Sharief

Telephones

The government seems to be working hard to create a highly developed telecommunication infrastructure in Jordan. Minister of Transport Sami Gammooh said that 1016 new telephone numbers were issued in June and there are lots more on the way. It is expected that 16,000 more telephone numbers will be installed this month.

Two-day weekend

Just as we thought it had disappeared for good in the beaurcrite triangle, the issue of a two-day weekend resurfaced again last week. The Ministry of Administrative Development has been waiting for reports from individual ministries on their views about the issue. Now the opinions of officials in each ministry have been gathered and are being studied. An earlier poll conducted by the Ministry of Administrative Development showed that 76 percent of employees in the public sector supported the idea of a two-day weekend, while 24 percent were against it. It was estimated that if the two-day weekend was implemented it would save the treasury up to 17.5 million a year.

Jerash Festival

The Jerash Festival for Arts and Culture will run 23 July-8 August. Director of the Festival Akram Masarwah, said that the event is important to the nation and to the Arab World in general. In a press conference last week he said that 1439 artists (including 87 poets, and 42 groups from 30 countries) are taking part in the festival. Among the top artists performing are singers Marcel Khalifeh, Diana Haddad, Abdel Majid Abdallah, and Elias Karam.



Masarwah

Al Nahdah closed

It seems that Al Nahdah, the mouthpiece of the National Constitutional Party (NCP), will be closed down until further notice. NCP General Secretary, Abdel Hadi Al Majalli, said the weekly is closing down temporarily because of human and financial resource problems. The offices of Al Nahdah are being closed down and are being transferred to the party headquarters, according to Al Sabeel.

Water

Minister of Water Munthir Haddadin says that contacts with Japan and Germany are being developed to allow them to participate in a project to bring drinking water from the Jordan Valley to Amman. The project costs JD 150 million. The Japanese government has already stated that it would be willing to grant \$71 million towards this project, which will take three years to complete. Haddadin says we pump 440 mcm from our resources despite the fact that our reserve capacity is only 275 mcm. He pointed out that this is why his Ministry has refused to give out licences to dig new wells. He added that the Ministry is already in the process of renewing the water infrastructure in Jordan which costs \$200 million. He reassured people that by the year 2002 all water problems will be solved.

Child dies

Something horrific happened the other day in Jenin Al Safat near Irbid. A cow trampled on a 12-year-old. The child immediately went into a coma, and was rushed to hospital in Dir Abi Saeed but died shortly afterwards.

Taxi driver shot

The corpse of a taxi driver was found this week in the woods of Naour. The driver, 25, was shot twice, and was found lying dead not far from his car. The autopsy concluded that the body was shot in the chest and stomach.

Cooperation

Captain Jasser Ziyad of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said that it is likely that there would be cooperation between Jordan and Israel in the field of aviation maintenance. He said that Jordan has already agreed that it would be possible to service Israeli planes in Jordan's airports. It appears that the CAA in Jordan was responding to a request for this service from the Israeli Civil Aviation Authority.

Meanwhile, Iraqi newspapers reported that the UN Sanctions Committee has rejected a Jordanian request to service six Iraqi civil planes that have been standing at Queen Alia International Airport since 1991.



King Hussein of Jordan, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat met in Cairo this week to discuss the deadlock in the Middle East peace process. The three leaders urged Israel to "immediately" give up its expansion plans for Jerusalem.

AFP photo

Poverty is main reason for child labor in Jordan

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

IN DOWNTOWN Amman, even during school hours, you'll find children below the age of 10 pushing heavy carts or selling useless items.

In more industrial areas, like Al Wehdat, a 14 year old boy is responsible for the entire check up on your car—he works full-time as an assistant mechanic. The problem is widespread in Jordan.

The definition of Child Labor according to the International Labor Organization (ILO) is work which is detrimental to the physical, psychological, or intellectual well-being of the child.

Statistics show that there are more than 250 million children in the world who can be considered economically active," said Ibrahim Al Sous, assistant secretary general of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The organization has three main considerations in mind when talking about child labor. Under the chairmanship of Mr Hamdi Tabbain, first there is the humanitarian angle to improve the condition of the places they are working in. The two other angles, according to Mr Al Sous, who is the ILO's regional director in Beirut, are socio-political and economic.

Studies and surveys carried out internationally prove that the main motive for children entering the workforce is poverty," said Dr Taleb Rifai, deputy regional director of ILO. He pointed out that a child may contribute between 20-25 percent of their income to their family's budget.

During the workshop held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the National Task Force for Children (NTFC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and the ILO formulated a Plan of Action on Child Labor.

A study conducted by Dr Janet Abboud from the Research and Database Unit at the NTFC, revealed the extent of child labor in Jordan in spite of the numerous laws prohibiting work for children under the age of 16. However through the years, the number of children in the labor market has varied according to economic conditions in society. About 31 percent of the

chosen sample—337 boys and girls—in the 1997 study, said that working to contribute to the family's earnings was on top of the list," said Dr Abboud. Only 24 percent said they just worked during the summer holidays.

Educational institutions may also be partly responsible for doing little to encouraging a 'school culture.'

If child labor is taken as an accepted fact, work conditions are not providing the minimum levels of security, health, or human dignity required.

"We were informed that children had no days off. According to our distribution of areas, in refugee camps 43 percent work without rest, 26 percent in poverty pockets and 25 percent in industrial areas."

Dr Abboud concluded that 32 percent of children had no rest periods and worked long hours, sometimes exceeding 12 hour shifts.

Jordan ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1984 and in 1991, respectively. Nevertheless, officials, parents, and employers still sympathize with and respond to the innocent faces of children selling or begging in the streets and offer them charity or buy some of their goods. This only increases the dilemma in the long run.

Last year, ministry workers found out that 60-70% of children arrested for loitering or begging, were not members of needy or poor families," Dr Mohammad Khair Manser, Minister of Social Development said. Many children had turned into professional beggars, playing on peoples' sympathy to make a quick buck.

But the ministry is trying hard to tackle the problem by taking children into care if they do not receive proper attention in their homes, and by running programs on awareness directed at parents.

The Jordanian Labor Law stipulates the prohibition of child labor under the age of 16 and under the age of 17 in dangerous areas that could expose juveniles to harm. Ultimately, children themselves need to give their views and take an active part in deciding their lives and futures. "Children should be informed about their rights so that they become more aware of their interests," Dr Abboud added.

Causes of school drop-out:

Low academic achievement	50%
School environment	35%
Lack of desire for education	34%
Financial need	31%
Child employment	29%
Other	22%

Employee punishments

Verbal punishment	48-51%
Physical punishment	10-12%
Salary cuts	4-11%
Warnings	4-10%
Dismissal	1-4%

View peace process

AMMAN (Star)—The issue of expanding the borders of Jerusalem continues to gain momentum in Jordanian newspapers. George Haddad, writing in *Ad Dustour*, concentrates on the European angle. He says that the Europeans are busy trying to iron out a formula that would be acceptable both to the Palestinians as well as the Americans.

Such a formula is an alternative to the resolution that was presented to the Security Council by Bahrain on behalf of the Arab Group which states that the Israeli decision is illegal.

The Americans don't want a resolution that condemns Israel, which means that the Europeans have to work hard to come up with a text that would satisfy both the Palestinians and the Americans.

As far as the Palestinians are concerned, nobody has the right to meddle with the Jerusalem issue. The Americans, on the other hand, as guarantors of the Oslo accord [the writer adds somewhat sarcastically that the Americans are the "clean and comprehensive partners" to the Arab Israeli peace process] want to guarantee the success of the negotiations, arguing that any condemnation of the state of the "chosen people" would only complicate the whole process.

In *Al Rai*, Salah Al Jarar questions the wisdom of the American position, which opposes any condemnation of the Israelis. He says the Americans have no right to tell the Palestinians or Arabs what to think or what to condemn or not condemn. He fears that there will come a day when the Palestinians, Arabs, and the whole Muslim world are ordered to keep silent about what Israel is doing lest it hinder the peace process.

Al Jarar added, again somewhat sarcastically, that had the Arab conference taken place last June, the Americans would have probably insisted that Palestinian or Iraqi issues not be discussed at all—in case they affected the peace process.

Writing in *Al Aswak*, Dr Hikmat Ajouri took a slightly different slant. He said that the idea of an Israeli referendum on redeployment from the Palestinian territories means that the current Israeli government have divested itself from agreements signed by the former labor government.

He went on to say that the decision to demographically change the city of Jerusalem must be considered as "the rape of Palestinian self-rule."

The latest decisions, he maintained, are the final nails in the coffin of the peace process, sealed when the Israeli prime minister first took office.

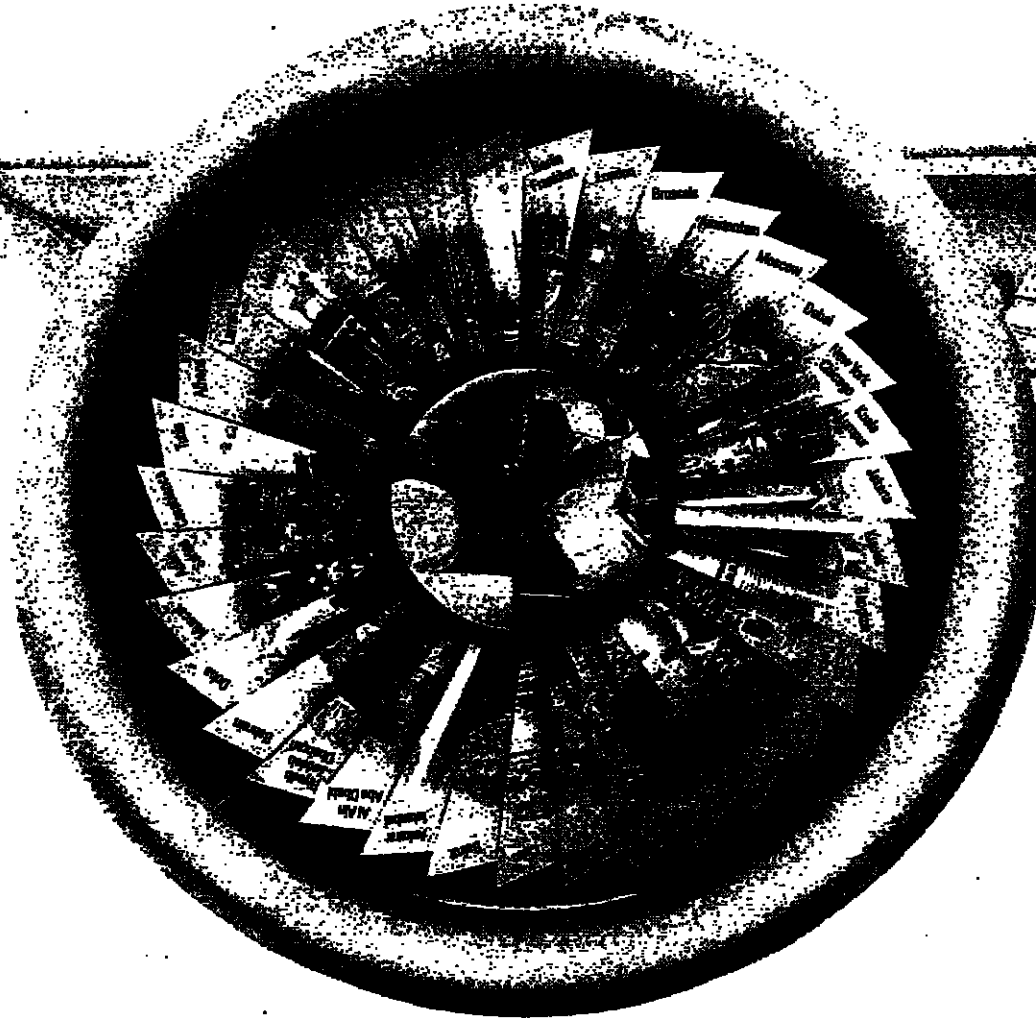
The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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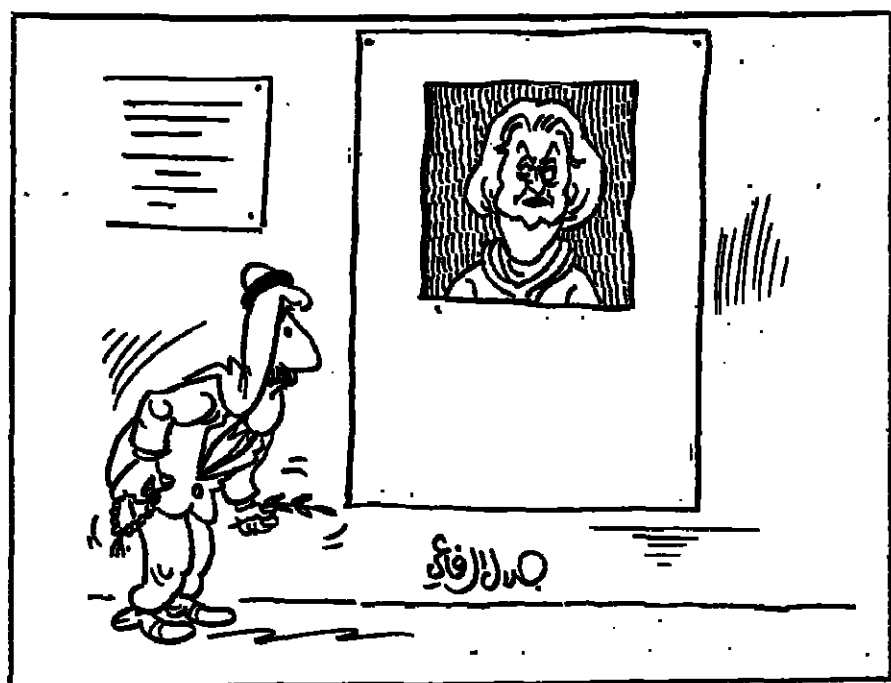
<http://www.rja.com.jo>

ROYAL JORDANIAN

Reflecting the Change.



Her Majesty Queen Noor graduates pupils from the Jubilee School. This is the second graduation ceremony of the school that is supervised by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation. Prince Hamza also attended the ceremony which was held at the theater of the school. The prince delivered a speech saying how delighted he was to be present at the ceremony. In attendance also was Prince Raed Ben Zeid, other Royals, former Minister of Education Dr Munthir Al Masri, other officials. Principal of the school Dr Fathi Jarwan welcomed the guests.



Our Say...

America's virtual problem

THE UN General Assembly's vote to upgrade the status of Palestinian representation to "virtual statehood" is a small and symbolic victory for the people of Palestine whose fate has been linked to the international organization since the historic partition resolution was adopted 51 years ago.

For the people of Palestine virtual statehood, whatever that means, falls short of full, or normal, statehood, and most importantly it changes nothing on the ground. Virtual or not, the state of Palestine remains imprisoned in the belly of the state of Israel. The whole question of Palestine is, in fact, and has been for the last half century, in a state of limbo. This week's vote is a shy gesture of goodwill by the world organization towards the very people whose memorable resolutions had partitioned their land, disjoined their nation and took their future from them.

What is more important than the vote itself is the opposition to it by a motley bunch made up of the world's superpower, the United States, in alliance with tiny Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, and Israel, of course. One hundred and twenty-four nations voted in favor of the resolution.

The United States ostentatious representative to the UN, the virtual Bill Richardson called the resolution "a mistake", and that it was "a wrong resolution at the wrong time", and that such a resolution could "undermine our [US] efforts to get the peace process back on track." To hear Mr Richardson babble of US efforts and of right and wrong is an insult to one's intelligence and self-respect, especially as we all know what these efforts have amounted to in the last few years.

It is disturbing that the US still fails to see the comical make-up of its anti-Arab alliance in the UN General Assembly. As far as we're concerned we have nothing against the people of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, and we fail to understand why those two states are adamant in their hostility to the Palestinian people and their legitimate aspirations. To see Mr Richardson left with only those two allies in his struggle to defend Israel's interest is not only shameful but despicable as well.

We don't trust the United States to deliver a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East any longer. Its actions belie its promises and assurances. Its excuses are pointed like daggers and its blind loyalty to Israel is beyond any doubt and above any interest. While we cannot eject the US from having a role in shaping the future of this region, we should at least end its monopoly. The current peace process has lost its credibility simply because the sponsor has lost it. The comical alliance of the US, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands testifies to this.



Egyptian workers in Cairo package sweets, 6 July, for the religious festival, or moulid, marking the birthday of the Moslem Prophet Mohammad's birthday.

AFP photo

What ails Hong Kong?

A year ago it was fireworks and stirring speeches. Today, analysts ask if it will be Asia's next domino.

By Robin Ajello and Law Siu-lan and reporting by Alejandro Reyes and Assif Shameen

BEFORE HE became Chief Executive of Hong Kong, Tung Chee-hwa had this to say about government intervention in the economy: "It is not an effective way to solve problems." How those words have come back to haunt him. After months of watching Hong Kong suffer its worst pain since World War II, Tung has ordered his economic mandarins to—yes—intervene.

On June 22, the Tung administration vowed to postpone government land sales until next March in an effort to stabilize prices and get banks lending again. The about-face was part of a \$5.7-billion package of measures, including limited tax breaks, to help stimulate an economy headed for recession. This will push the government into a rare deficit of \$2.7 billion.

Sitting with a row of grim-faced officials, Tung told the beleaguered citizenry: "The Asian crisis has brought a lot of pain and suffering to Hong Kong people. We believe that we are in a critical phase and, therefore, we have to be pragmatic."

How pragmatic the stimulus measures are remains to be seen; the reviews are decidedly mixed. Tung critics say the policy reversal may lead currency speculators to bet the government will also change its mind about keeping the Hong Kong dollar pegged to the greenback. And few believe the measures will help long-term. "Hong Kong passed up a great opportunity to restructure and diversify the economy," says ING Barings economist Kevin Chan. "Instead of reducing the dependence on property, we are betting more money on its revival."

Hong Kong, like the rest of Asia, faces wrenching adjustment. Once the contraction ends a new and improved Hong Kong will, in the sunset analysis, emerge from the wreckage. In the meantime, Hong Kongers will be tested as never before, not only due to the regional crisis, but because the city has become addicted to making a quick buck.

Remember When...

It may seem like a century ago now, but last July the mood in Hong Kong was pretty upbeat—there were fireworks, stirring speeches, revelers in the rainy streets. Tung bullishly pronounced Hong Kongers "masters of our own house." Despite doomsayers who predicted Beijing would meddle in the new special administrative region and kill the golden goose, the world as Hong Kong knew it did not come to an end when the clock struck midnight on July 1.

Even then, however, crisis was brewing offshore: one day after the handover, the Thai baht floated free—and the economic dominoes began to topple. In Hong Kong much was made of strong fundamentals, a level playing field and the mammoth reserves to protect the dollar peg. The city seemed well insulated against the regional fallout. But Tung and his team understood that just as the implacable juggernaut of globalization had revealed corruption, nepotism and collusion elsewhere, it could also expose cracks in Hong Kong's economy. Tung had a catch-phrase for his philosophy: "Locate pitfalls when you are safe."

Tung did so during his first policy speech in October. "Hong Kong has broken free from the psychological constraints of the colonial era," he said. His vision was a Hong Kong with less laissez-faire and more government activism—especially in property, education and welfare.

Tung made affordable housing his administration's defining policy. He proposed to build 85,000 flats a year over a half-decade to increase supply, gradually bringing down prices, thereby reducing the role property plays in the economy and the volatility that engenders.

Tung's predecessor, the last British governor Chris Patten, dubbed the new tack "creeping socialism." But others applauded. One was Sze Wing-ching, who owns Centaline, Hong Kong's largest real-estate agency. "The British administration's short-sightedness brought many problems—the property bubble was the most detrimental," says Sze. "It had to be corrected, and Tung's platform was heading in the right direction."

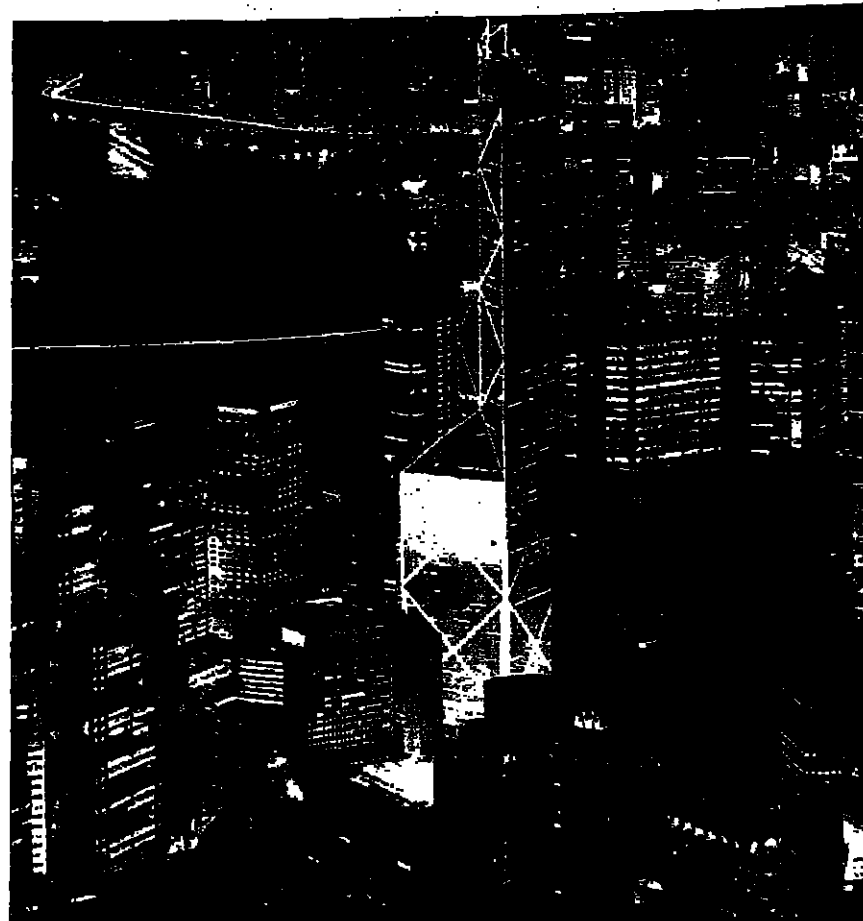
Then, just two weeks after Tung unveiled his blueprint, the regional crisis spread to Hong Kong. On October 23, Black Thursday, speculators raided the dollar after Taiwan opted to let its currency devalue. Interbank interest rates soared to 280 percent, and the Hang Seng Index nose-dived 10.4 percent. The bears came out of their caves, the jubilation of the handover already forgotten. "High interest rates are doses of cyanide," said legislator Tsui Pui-chung dramatically. "It will kill Hong Kong's economy."

To the person in the street it has begun to look as though at least parts of Hong Kong are indeed dying. Last year people lined up a dozen deep at designer shops; now the same boutiques are empty. Nearly three million tourists arrived at Kai Tak airport in the first quarter of 1997; for the same period this year less than 2.2 million showed up. The city is littered with bankrupt retailers, and at a recent flat auction, estate agents outnumbered buyers.

Worse still for middle-class homeowners, property prices have kept sliding. Yet for months the clamor for Tung tore-think his housing policy fell on deaf ears. Before finally announcing a halt to land sales at the end of June, the most he could offer were platitudes and the assertion that "we do not want to see property prices fall further." Not surprisingly, Tung's approval rating has tumbled. Around the handover, it hit a high of 78 percent; recently his score has been scraping along in the 50s. A recent survey revealed a decided preference for Patten's stewardship. That has got to hurt.

Is hard work enough?

Of all Hong Kong clichés, you probably



Hong Kong now faces greater economic competition from the mainland

hear this one the most: Hong Kong people are adaptable. Yes, they are—or rather have been. Over the decades, as the go-go city transmogrified from opium exporter to maker of plastic flowers to financial service center, local entrepreneurs have demonstrated a canny ability to keep on top of the changes and flourish. Hence the theory goes, they will be able to handle this transition with their usual aplomb.

Well, let's examine that. For starters, consider what the property economy has done to the local psyche. Buying land in Hong Kong has, over the years, become a state of mind. People plan their lives and careers around it. "Here, after 15 years of a continuous property boom, real estate has become like opium," says Centaline chief Sze. "And the people are addicted."

During the boom years, one didn't need to be a hotshot fund manager to make a million—thousands of people did by buying and selling flats. People like Li Yuen-wah, 48, a garment trader who moved to Hong Kong from China in 1979. For three years, she and her husband toiled away until they could afford a roof-top home for HK\$30,000 (about \$4,600 in 1982). It wasn't much but they planned to move up as soon as they could afford it.

Then in the mid-80s, banks, hoping to boost pre-handover confidence, began offering 90 percent mortgages. Like thousands of others, the pair jumped on the property rocket. Thanks to negative real interest rates, pretty soon they were flipping real estate like pros. They started a garment business—using their flat as collateral.

It all came to a sudden end earlier this year. When property prices fell, credit dried up and the business failed. In the end, Li was forced to sell both her flats, at a loss of some \$300,000. "Now," she says, "I'm a proletarian like my father." And has she learned her lesson? No way! Given the chance, she would do it all over again.

Law student Christopher Wong chuckles at such tales. "What caused this irrationality," he says, "is a virtual religion built around property." Yet last year, Wong, too, felt obliged to buy an apartment. Not anymore. "We'll do it when we're financially ready," he says. "There is no hurry."

Wong, 26, represents the post-boom generation that came of age during mostly prosperous years. His wait-and-see attitude is quite at odds with Li, who epitomizes an earlier group of adrenaline-fueled refugees determined to make money as fast as possible. Older people who helped build Hong Kong into what it is today look askance at the younger generation, who seem more keen on being trendy than on working hard. And though the city has become more international over the decades, English-language proficiency has declined, not good for a place that aspires to continue as middle-man to the mainland. Yet the government, in an effort to improve Cantonese instruction, has forced many schools to cut back their English curricula.

And the go-go mindset has its limitations, too. While daring entrepreneurs kept Hong Kong competitive by moving factories across the border, they did not think to move the value chain into high-tech industries. Quality was mostly sacrificed for quick returns and high volumes.

Tung recognized these deficits, and in his maiden policy address announced plans to move Hong Kong into high-tech industry. His old friend Tien Chang-lien, former president of the University of California at Berkeley explains: "This does not necessarily mean Hong Kong has to develop high-tech industries. A lot of innovation can be injected into service industries to add value."

Still, the details are notably sparse. Besides, Hong Kong graduates are not known for their creativity. "Good exam results is still the cornerstone," says Victor Lo, who runs Innovative and Technology, a multimedia company. "There are few examples where innovators are allowed to achieve excellence without compromising costs." In recent years, moreover, many of Hong Kong's best and brightest have put most of their energy into property speculation—not innovating. "If we don't develop a knowledge-based economy," says Executive Councillor Raymond Chien, "Hong Kong will become like Venice." In other words, an anachronism.

The bulls are alive

If adaptability is the No. 1 Hong Kong cliché, then lack of service is the top gripe. "Out of stock," or a dismissive wave of the hand is all part of the local shopping experience.

During the tourism boom, there was a steady stream of visiting shopaholics, and service didn't much matter. But the chief diplomatic embarrassment for the Tung administration this past year was the revelation that hotels and retailers were gouging Japanese tourists.

Now that tourism and retailing are tanking, shop-owners must switch their emphasis from tourists to home grown customers—and get them coming back for more. Already, there is movement on that front. Park 'N Shop, Watson's pharmacy and Optical Shop all have new logos, interiors and beefed-up product lines. Cashiers even smile on occasion—honest!

Pricerite, a 37-store chain that sells a household wares, adopted a new logo and interior design in one outlet. "Sales immediately went up 10 percent," says the retailer's gratified CEO Dallas Cheung. Now he is considering overhauling the whole chain.

Hints of adaptability already. In fact, in interviews with industry leaders, analysts and government officials, the prognosis for Hong Kong is mostly up-beat. Three days after Tung announced the stimulus package, a survey conducted by Hong Kong's international business community was released. The finding: 80 percent of the participants were positive about Hong Kong's business environment over the next three years.

The stated reasons for much of the enthusiasm include the continued emphasis on rule of law, the city's strategic location and the growing links with the mainland. "Most likely we'll see all major Chinese companies operating out of Hong Kong," says Executive Councillor Antony Leung. "And because of this, multinationals will want to be in Hong Kong as well." Hong Kong still has an edge. The analogy is what I would call "Mambatan-plus."

Go north, young person

Ever since China opened up in 1979, Hong Kong has played entrepot between the world's largest putative market and the rest of the planet. Hong Kong had the expertise: the mainland had cheap labor and raw resources. But now the relationship is starting to change. In the old days, for example, goods that were cranked out across the border were generally shoddy and required polishing in Hong Kong before being re-exported. Now, mainland-produced widgets are good enough to travel direct.

In fact, these days, Hong Kongers are swallowing their pride and looking north not just for cheap labor but for ideas, too. Allan Wong is the chairman of VTEch, a world player in electronic toys. He has a passion for quality and technology, making him a rare breed in Hong Kong. "In the 70s, you could probably get by with hard work," he says. "These days, working hard is a prerequisite, but it doesn't guarantee you will be successful. The nature of this market means you need the best R&D."

The way Wong sees it, a handful of quality engineers beats 100 mediocre ones. And where does he recruit his people? You guessed it: China. VTEch runs one of the largest R&D teams in the country. Wong pays them well, over HK\$20,000 (\$2,600) a month. "Don't expect to get away with paying HK\$5,000 a month for the best engineering talent in China," he says.

More and more Hong Kongers are looking to the mainland for work and education. Students are thinking the same way. Civil engineering undergrad Stanley Chan is looking forward to a one-and-a-half-month internship in the Three Gorges Dam project. "We'll be staying with interns from mainland universities," he says. "There will be a lot of exchanges, and I can improve my professional knowledge while practicing Mandarin." More than half of Chan's Hong Kong University class is prepared to take up employment on the mainland.

The school's China affairs officer Isabella Wong has noticed a marked shift in attitudes since the handover. "Students used to see China as corrupt and backward," she says. "Going required special hardship allowances. But not any more. They realize they will soon compete with mainland youths for job opportunities."

What a rich irony. A year ago much of the world was convinced the handover would be bad for Hong Kong. Yet it is China, by holding the line on the renminbi and offering fresh opportunities, that is keeping what is arguably its most important city buffered from the cruellest economic winds. And that, at least, must give Tung some peace of mind.

Middle East Beat

by
Khairi Janbek

National Unity

MUCH HAS been made about national unity in our country. We forget, however, that national unity is not something that can be constructed according to the whims of individuals. It simply exists and this is revealed in the daily interaction of Jordanians from different roots and origins.

To ascribe adjectives of identity, origin and regionalism to our understanding of unity, lacks perspective just as trees are stuck to people, and birds are fixed in the sky in a Persian miniature—without motion or life.

Jordan's national unity is based on belonging to land—a reality that does not require any justification. Jordan belongs to whoever belongs to it, and they do not require a badge of identification. Throughout the rough and tumble, our nation fused its notion of unity, maintaining in the course of its history the aim of Arab unity, the glory of moderate Islam, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

No Jordanian is likely to disagree about national aspirations under the Hashemite ethos of one Jordanian family. Undoubtedly, we face many collective challenges such as economic hardship, intellectual renaissance, and the strengthening of political pluralism, but our identity as Jordanians is very clear—amongst ourselves and to the world.

A country like ours, which sets the stage in the Arab world for multi-party democracy, tolerance, and co-existence of faiths, can confidently absorb a few diversions along the way.

Our jealously guarded progress towards a better future, however, has provoked a national mentality which believes that crises are inextricably linked with change and renovation. The lack of a crisis, has made a few within our country contrive their own. This allows stagnating mentalities to thrive—a seemingly intellectual leadership and an ill-informed constituency coexisting in a way which is reminiscent of a TV program where anger and malevolent emotions are required for high ratings and to vent popular frustrations.

The state is not a media program, and neither is it run by rumors or hearsay by people who act as if they are exiled in their own country. A sense of belonging is governed by objective factors based on reality, and subjective factors based on simple human desires and emotions.

Such factors have never been the monopoly of one region, or one sort of people. Our national unity is not a negation, but rather an affirmation and those who think in terms of negation need to examine their souls for their sense of belonging, and not allow their private ambitions stand in the way of the development of our country and people. Those who are most loyal to Jordan do not wish to see it in trouble.

The geographic and historical links that the both banks of the river Jordan have awarded a special place to Jordanian-Palestinian relations on the West Bank. Therefore, the Hashemite Kingdom's responsibilities towards the Occupied Territories have always been qualitatively different to other Arab nations' responsibilities towards the Palestinian question. Now that the PNA is a reality, and there is an independent Palestinian peace track, Jordan neither competes for people nor for territory with any side. The future of this case will be determined by the nature of the entity that emerges from the final status negotiations, by the will of both the Jordanian people and the Palestinians of the PNA territory. Every state adjusts to particular emerging realities, but national unity is not a factor in this adjustment for each individual in this case will be free to adopt the nationality of their choice. Certainly there are steps that need to be taken in order to enhance equal opportunities among all Jordanian citizens, but also it is important to remember that Jordan is a nation and not a profession.

Business scene

The World Bank approved a \$67 million loan to finance three Jordanian projects including tourist development enterprises, the infrastructure development project in civil institutions and an enterprise to deal with training and labor. The loans are donated at an annual interest rate of 6%. This is compared with overall loans of \$120 million and \$140 million in 1996 and 1997 respectively.

The Higher Committee in charge of preparing for the first Conference for Jordanian businessmen and investors, met under the chairmanship of Mr Hamdi Tabtain, to discuss steps to attract Jordanian participants from different parts of the world. The committee aims to brief them about the investment environment in Jordan and highlight legal and administrative measures to provide incentives to the private sector to take a more active role in development enterprises.

The committee also approved the promotional program for the venue. It is intended to encourage Jordanian companies to participate in the conference, the first of its kind in Jordan.

Pre-tax net profits of Amman-Cairo Bank stood at JD 7.53 million in 1997. This year earnings reached about JD 3.88 million, showing a rise of 6% compared with 1996. Distributable profits totaled JD 7.09 million. The bank's balance sheet for last year was nearly JD 788.5 million, an increase of 12.6% compared to 1996. Shareholders rights recorded a growth of more than JD 3.1 million to reach JD 28.2 million. Clients' deposits are up 16% on last year to JD 674.06 million and the net revenue of interest rates and commissions reached JD 28.4 million.

The ratio of non-Jordanian shares in shareholding companies reached about 40% last April, compared with 38% at the beginning of the year. Available statistics issued by the Amman Financial Market revealed that non-Jordanian transactions reached about JD 60.2 million in the first three months this year against JD 32.5 million in the same period last year. Overall purchases made by non-Jordanian investors were in the region of JD 22.3 million from last May to the beginning of this year.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 8 JULY

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SFR	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

Construction sector faces hard times

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

ANALYSTS ARGUE that the construction sector is a barometer for the whole economy. If this vital sector suffers from problems or is depleted, the effects reverberate.

For the past four years, the construction industry has slumped, most noticeably in the last two years. Statistics, however, have overestimated the degree of the apparent recession in this sector.

It is reported that the overall value of the national construction sector was JD 1325 million, JD 1196 million and JD 905 million in 1995, 1996 and 1997, respectively. Analysts point out that the problem is that the sector has the capacity to carry out projects to the value of JD 3 billion but is only reaching a target of JD 905 million.

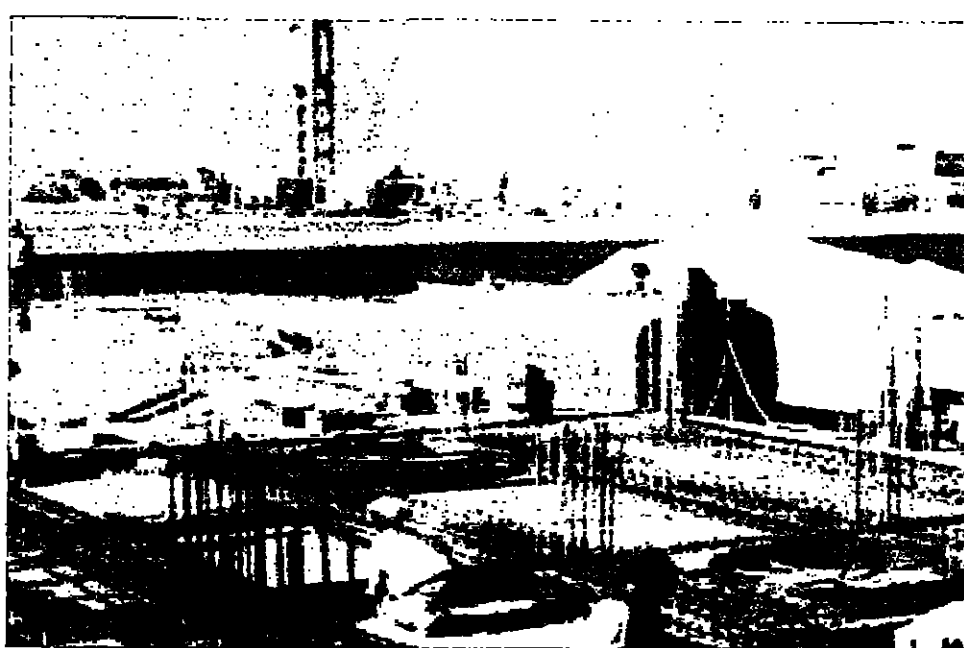
"Construction activity has declined dramatically over the past two years. Among the obstacles facing this sector is the 'contract' which does not

allow for arbitration and compensation in case of fluctuation in international prices of materials or currencies," said the President of Jordan's Contractors Association (JCA), Mr Wael Touqan.

Another obstacle is malpractice by some of the ministries and the Audit Bureau. "We believe that all construction activities should be referred to the specialized Ministry of Public Works and Housing as the best reference for all contractual and technical aspects," he added.

Mr Sali Al Zoubi, owner of a contracting company and member of the JCA, defended contractors, stating, "Today we operate at only 10 percent of our actual capacity. According to the latest figures released by the Amman Greater Municipality, only about one million square meters have so far been licensed for construction, although the average is 4.5 million square meters," he said.

Most construction activity is carried out in the summer, and licences are sought well in



Jordanian construction firms need to compete more effectively with foreign contractors

advance. Some attribute the worsening situation to the existence of unlicensed contractors, while others criticize the domination of foreign companies and contractors in this important sector.

Engineer Raouf Shadeed, director of the United Engineers Contracting Est. disagreed that the issue of unlicensed contractors is the problem. "In a country which follows the strategy of the free economy or the free market, we can't prevent any national contractor or investor from investing his money in any way he finds it profitable," he said.

This also applies to foreign investors. Jordan is preparing to gain membership of the World Trade Organization, which will give free access to outside investors. "Instead of blaming foreign companies for their domination of the construction market, we should lay a sound base for developing this sector to meet the new challenges," Mr Shadeed added.

But some contractors still stress that foreign contractors delay making due payments to local firms and the latter are forced to keep silent. "Contractors are forced to deal with foreign counterparts, often at minimum profit after meeting their financial obligations to their workers in the field," said Mr Al Zoubi.

Other contractors say that big tenders and projects are

mainly awarded to foreign contractors, who operate freely and without supervision or control. However, foreign contractors cannot carry out projects in the kingdom without subcontracting to local firms or giving them at least a 25 percent share of a project.

According to the Investment Promotion Law, in some sectors, foreign investors are allowed to own 100 percent of their enterprises. Some sectors are excluded from this law, however, and the construction sector is one of them.

Mr Shadeed said that foreign companies would not be able to carry out their projects without the help and participation of local ones, so there is no need to mention this in the law.

If the situation in the construction sector is as critical as people say, then contractors will have to combine their efforts and create larger companies to face outside competition.

Mr Shadeed stressed that mergers and coalitions must be formed to compete with foreign companies. "By cooperating with them through joint ventures we can upgrade our standards and benefit from their high-technology. By meeting these goals, our construction industry could regain its strength and we could even export our construction expertise, especially to neighboring countries," he said.

Local contractors say that foreign contracting companies violate the JCA Law by owning more than a 60 percent stake in the overall construction market.

Mr Shadeed said that this should serve as a motive for local contractors to act immediately and prove they are up to the challenge. He added that it is imperative that decision makers and legislators push our construction firms to export their expertise.

Sharing this view is Mr Al Zoubi, who says that it is important to market Jordan's construction abilities and skills abroad through government trade agreements.

Lower House deputy Mr Khalil Auiyah, himself a member of the JCA, also admits that the contracting sector is going through hard times and added that deputies are doing their best to meet contractors' demands and get them the support they need from legislators.

Mr Al Zoubi, head of the Public Relations Committee in the Islamic Countries Contractors' Association, promised that he will do his utmost to get approval to hold the committee's next meeting in Jordan. He believes that marketing Jordan's construction industry widely will do a great deal to help put an end to the current slump.

Business Chronicle

Growth figures arouse controversy.

REALITY SOMETIMES huns, but this can be healthy if it helps people to focus and find solutions to the problem at hand.

The information disclosed by Mr Kamal Darweesh, one of the deputies of the World Bank (WB), regarding the real growth figures of the Jordanian economy—which contradicted official estimates in Jordan—has been received with mixed reactions among officials, economic experts and even the man in the street. The governmental declared growth ratio was 5.2 percent for 1996 and 5.3 percent for 1997, whereas the World Bank statistics reveal a growth ratio of only 1 and 3 percent respectively.

Whenever official figures attempt to glorify the Jordanian economic performance, experts repeatedly criticize them arguing that the figures are misleading. Often, official figures are based on 'bubble figures', which ignore factors such as the rising unemployment. Many cynics point out that if such growth ratios are true, it should be reflected in people's pockets. However, we all know the situation is different, with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer, and despite this, officials continue to praise the performance of the economy.

Director of the Statistical Department at the Planning Ministry, Dr Abdul Razak Bani Hani, specifically stated that the government had not intended to mislead people or hide the facts. He said that his Ministry will be introducing more scientific methods, with the intention of producing estimates of greater accuracy in the future. New quarterly statistics are expected very soon.

Why such a difference between declared and actual figures? Are they politicized or not? Dr Bani Hani attributed the newly declared poor growth ratios to the general economic recession prevailing in the region, as well as the consequences of the Gulf war and the additional burdens that it placed on Jordan. The difficulty in marketing products outside Jordan, is another factor, especially in the Palestinian territories where Israel is putting obstacles in front of Jordanian exports and hindering the exchange of goods. The restrictions and economic sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations after 1991, are also hindering the exchange of goods between these two countries.

But the picture is not all gloom. Some economic experts who share Dr Bani Hani's view—that the Jordanian economy is recovering from its ailments. The rate of inflation has dropped from 6 percent to 3 percent and the foreign reserves at the Central Bank of Jordan have reached \$1.7 billion, indicating a healthy economy. Some distortions do exist, but optimists argue that time will prove that the Jordanian economy is moving on the right track.



BritishBank's interest-free loan competition was won by Mr Khalid Darwish Bajak. The lucky winner received his valuable prize recently from BritishBank's Chief Executive Officer, Mr John Pascoe.

Jordan-Saudi relations upbeat

Amman (Star)—Jordan-Saudi economic relations are upbeat this week. Minister of Industry and Trade Dr Hani Malki and his Saudi counterpart Osama Al Faqih opened the Second Saudi Products Exhibition in Amman on Saturday.

The six-day exhibition aims at better acquainting Jordanians with Saudi products, increasing sales in this country and enhancing economic and trade ties between Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

The volume of Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia reached JD 141 last year whereas the volume of imports amounted to JD 110.

Dr Mulqi said that Saudi Arabia is now a major trading partner with Jordan. In a joint press conference, Mulqi hailed the trade agreements between the two countries as positive. The idea is to further develop relations between the two countries and break down barriers that obstruct the expansion of trade relations.

Faqeh said that his visit to Jordan is an opportunity to review trade cooperation with Jordan, stressing that relations between countries should proceed on the premise that both sides benefit.

The Saudi Minister was also received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Has-



Dr Hani Malki and Osama Al Faqih open the 2nd Saudi Products Exhibition in Amman

san and later met with Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majali to discuss bilateral relations and joint investments.

Dr Majali praised the current state of Jordanian-Saudi relations but called for further cooperation and joint investment in all economic sectors.

The Prime Minister also suggested that a feasibility study should be carried out to assess the possibility of reviving the Hijazi railway, which would further increase trade between the two countries.

The railway would also transport passengers, especially during the pilgrimage season.

Dr Osama Faqih told reporters after the meeting with the Prime Minister that they discussed the idea of activating a free trade exchange agreement that would accelerate the setting up of an Arab free trade zone.

The Saudi Minister said the two sides stressed the need for greater coordination and data exchange to facilitate

flow of goods between the two sides.

Furthermore, a draft transport agreement has been reached, which will be finalized by the joint Jordanian committee before the end of this year, he said.

President of the Council of Saudi Chamber of Commerce, Khalid Al Zamil, said that Jordanian and Saudi businessmen signed various trade deals during their meetings Saturday.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency on Sunday, Al Zamil described the trade and transport agreement as important, adding that it would reflect positively on businessmen from both countries.

Al Zamil expressed the hope that trade exchange between Jordan and Saudi Arabia will increase, noting that Jordan is an important trade partner for Saudi Arabia.

MARKET WATCH 4-5 JULY

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	%	SUNDAY	%	MONDAY	%	TUESDAY	%
TADINCO	5.11	Irish Electricity	5.26	Union Bank	5.38	Union Bank	5.38
Nusa Industry	5.36	United Industry	5.00	United Financial	5.41	United Financial	5.41
Arab Investment Bank	4.64	Zam Investment	5.17	Gulf Insurance	5.30	Gulf Insurance	5.30
Al-Naser Insurance	5.14	Commercial Industry	5.31	National Steel	5.66	National Steel	5.66
Industry Union	5.15	National Cable	5.26	National Investment	5.88	National Investment	5.88
Trade Center	6.67	Industrial Resources	5.17	United Industry	4.00	United Industry	4.00

General Price Pointers	167,420	169,596	174,630
Trade Volume	700,664	128,9196	1068,477
Stock Volume	569,966	838,927	540,029

Highest Traded Stocks			
Al-Ahli Bank	140975	Tourism Hotels	289,100
		Arab Bank	433,725

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Mahathir may seek IMF help

By Sheila McNulty

MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, the Malaysian prime minister, said yesterday the country might be forced to seek aid from the International Monetary Fund, backtracking on earlier vows never to accept IMF assistance.

"Until now we did not need IMF help because we have taken some measures to help the economy," Dr Mahathir said. "However, if we still cannot solve the economic problems, maybe one day we will have to bow to the IMF." Dr Mahathir's comments reflected a new-found awareness of the depths of Malaysia's economic problems. His insistence that Malaysia had not been seriously affected by the regional crisis dissolved when the central bank recently announced the economy contracted by an annual 1.8 percent in the first quarter. Even foreign economists had been led to believe the situation was not that dire.

But as the crisis has deepened in recent months, banks have sharply cut lending to keep from adding to mounting bad loans. Currency and share prices continue to deteriorate as investors remain unsure how the authorities intend to revive growth.

In the past 12 months Dr

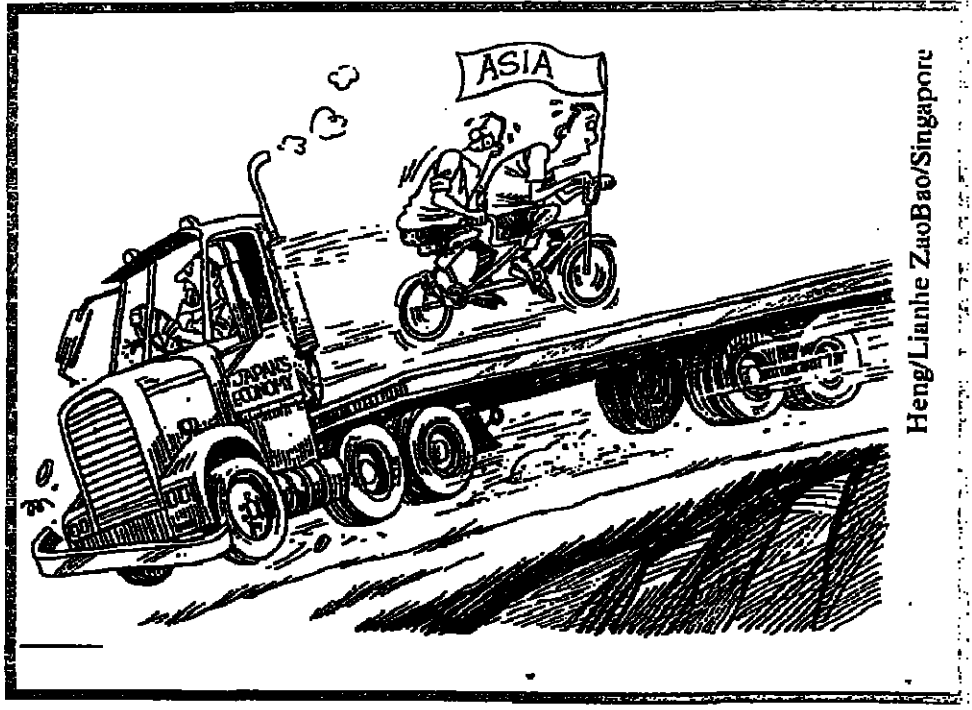
Mahathir has blamed the east Asian financial crisis on foreigners conspiring to undermine regional economies. He has dismissed calls for internal reform and accused the IMF of aggravating the problems of neighbouring countries that have implemented its reforms by cutting wages, workers and shutting companies. "For them

(the IMF), the suffering of the employees is unimportant," he said. "It is only important for them to revive the economy through reduced spending."

Although Dr Mahathir permitted his deputy and finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim, to follow IMF advice to keep interest rates high, in addition to cutting spending, economists

say he was not prepared for the pressure this would put on companies and the Malaysian people.

Dr Mahathir has elevated his economic adviser, Daim Zaiduddin, to the cabinet to focus on the economy and start dismantling Mr Anwar's policies. Financial Times Syndication



Israeli leaders blame each other for stalled peace

By Rebecca Trounson

JERUSALEM—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and leaders of Israel's political opposition this week bitterly accused one another of lying to the Israeli people and the international community about the Middle East peace process.

In a special session of the Israeli parliament, leaders of the opposition Labor and Meretz parties launched their fiercest attack to date on Netanyahu, calling the prime minister a liar whose "deceitful maneuvering" is bringing the country closer to war, not peace, with the Palestinians.

Netanyahu, in turn, who was making his first address to lawmakers on the peace process in seven months, charged that Labor, during its years in power, gave secret promises to the Palestinians and Syrians that his government has been forced to negate.

"Don't talk to us about credibility," the Israeli leader said, wagging his finger at opposition members. He advised them to bow their heads "in shame."

Netanyahu also reiterated recent statements that the Palestinian leadership, not that of Israel, is to blame for the lack of progress toward peace.

For nearly 16 months, negotiations between Israel

and the Palestinians have been in an impasse, bogged down in an atmosphere of mutual anger and suspicion that began with Israeli settlement building in traditionally Arab East Jerusalem and deepened with several deadly Palestinian bombings inside Israel. A recent U.S. initiative to revive the talks also appears stalled.

Monday's recriminations, which followed several recent high-level attacks on Netanyahu and his policies, reinforced a growing sense among some politicians and analysts here that the prime minister, caught between hard-liners and moderates even within his own coalition, may be unable to commit himself to turning over more land to the Palestinians.

"The government is trapped in a bunker-like mentality, and Netanyahu lives in it like a prisoner," Nahum Barnea, one of Israel's most respected columnists, wrote in Monday's daily Yediot Aharonot.

Netanyahu was forced to address Monday's parliament session after the Labor Party collected signatures from one-third of the 120 legislators, demanding a debate on the peace process. The angry, often personal, speeches were yet another reminder of the depths to which Middle East peacemaking has plunged since Israel and the

Palestinians signed their first interim agreement five years ago.

In his comments Monday, Labor Party leader Ehud Barak sought to capitalize on what many Israelis are calling a growing credibility problem for Netanyahu after recent accusations of deception leveled against him directly by President Ezer Weizman and indirectly by some of his own political allies, including Cabinet Minister Ariel Sharon.

The opposition leader said that Netanyahu, during his two years in power, has frittered away much of the international goodwill Israel gained after signing peace accords with the Palestinians in 1993 and 1995, and later with Jordan. Barak ticked off the names of foreign and Israeli leaders he said no longer believe Netanyahu.

"(Palestinian Authority President) Yasser Arafat is not willing to talk to you. But Clinton does not return your calls. (US Secretary of State) Madeleine Albright is tired of your empty words. (Jordan's) King Hussein refuses to speak with you. (Egyptian President Hosni) Mubarak doesn't answer. The (Israeli) president is not prepared to help you," Barak said.

Weizman, Israel's outspoken president, last week urged Netanyahu to call for early elections, in his

strongest public statement yet of frustration over the deadlocked peace process and his sense of having been misled by Netanyahu. The two men later agreed to keep their differences private, but not before Netanyahu, in his own broadside, accused Weizman of siding with opposition and Arab leaders against the government.

On Sunday, Sharon, the infrastructure minister, asked Netanyahu in a Cabinet meeting to help him reconcile what Sharon said were contradictory versions of events—both from the prime minister—concerning last week's tense standoff between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police over use of a Gaza Strip road. The confrontation ended without violence after a compromise agreement was worked out.

Netanyahu told the Cabinet that he was glad the standoff ended peacefully but, according to Sharon, had told him earlier that he was not happy about the agreement and had not signed off on it. Netanyahu, according to Israeli media accounts, did not deny the earlier conversation with Sharon but said the minister should not have disclosed a private conversation.

Yossi Sarid, the leader of the leftist Meretz Party and other opposition lawmakers, seized on the credibility

issue in Monday's rancorous debate, branding Netanyahu a liar and a "man of tricks."

Along with the personal attacks, Barak, a former army chief of staff and close aide to assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, told parliament members that he feared Netanyahu's policies are pushing the country toward a renewed conflict with the Palestinians. "What happened to you, Mr. Prime Minister?" he asked. "Instead of peace, you are bringing us closer to war."

In equally sharp remarks, Netanyahu suggested that Barak's speech, which he dismissed, was the result of poor advice from an American "image consultant" hired by the Labor Party leader.

The prime minister said that his government, which reluctantly inherited the agreements with the Palestinians from the previous, Labor-led coalition, has been forced to "repair" and strengthen those accords and to back away from promises made to the Syrians on the return of the Golan Heights. Negotiations with Syria have been frozen since the spring of 1996, before Netanyahu was elected.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Arabisation law fuels tensions between Algerian government and linguistic minorities



Berbers in Tizi demonstrate against the Arabisation law in Algeria

By a Star staff writer and combined news agencies

THE SLIPPERY slope to more violence, this time between the Arabic and Berber-speaking communities. This is what observers are saying about the new law to make the use of Arabic compulsory in Algeria.

From now on, Arabic will be obligatory in business and education. Fines will be levied on those who breach the law by using another language such as French which is widely spoken in Algeria. The Arabisation law is being

introduced on the 36th anniversary of Algeria's independence from French colonial rule.

The law has come in for fierce criticism from Algeria's Berber-speaking minority who inhabit the Kabiliya region east of the capital, Algiers. They have long campaigned to have their own Berber or Tamazight tongue recognised as an official language alongside Arabic.

Aside from the cultural dimension, observers say that the practicalities of the decision must be considered. Algerian Socialist politician Hussein Ait Ahmed has bitterly

criticized the law saying that it would cause widespread disruption in the system.

"This law is—excuse the expression—a real shambles," he told the French daily *Le Figaro* earlier this week. His Front of Social Forces has called for a protest march as the law came into effect earlier this week.

He claimed that only a tiny minority of Algerians could speak classical Arabic and that most executives were French speakers, and administrative documents were written in French.

"That shows how the government is condemning to dangerous disorder a fragmented and uneducated society, an administration undermined by corruption and incompetence," he said.

However, it is generally agreed that the younger generation of Algerians, who have been taught Arabic in school, are more proficient in speaking the language than their elders.

The government stresses the importance of the Arabic language to the state, but Berber activists say that the new law is a heavy-handed attempt by the government to appease its Islamist opponents and shore up its faltering credentials.

On the other hand, supporters of Arabisation argue that recognising Berber as an official language would undermine Arabic and leave French as the only language that Algerians have in common.

It is feared that relations between the two communities—Arab and Berber—could be deteriorating. The Western media has largely presented the conflict in Algeria as involving two parties—the government and an armed Islamic opposition—ignoring Algerian civilians who find themselves caught in the middle.

The death of Algerian singer Loulou Matoub fueled tensions in the country last week. Matoub, a whisky drinker who wrote lyrics mocking the Islamists, was the man many non-Berbers loved to hate. It is generally believed it was the Islamists—not the government—that were behind his killing at a fake roadblock. Nevertheless, his death has served as a Berber rallying call to attack the government.

The death of Matoub has come at a dangerous moment, only a few days before the new law comes into effect making Arabic the sole official language. Berber speakers like Matoub argued this is a government attempt to appease the fundamentalists and that the Berbers would fight to prevent it.

In his music and his political activism, Matoub was radically pro-Berber. Now young Berbers see him as a martyr and as a potent symbol of the continuing struggle for their cultural identity.

The Berbers are the original inhabitants of north Africa. When the Arabs came in the seventh century AD, they were the last in a long line of conquerors. They brought with them their language, Arabic, and their religion, Islam, but Algeria has always remained a multicultural society where Arabic has coexisted with Berber dialects and, more recently, with French.

The Berbers played a prominent role in the war of independence against the French. But ever since independence, in 1962, successive governments have stressed the Arab character of the state—and the Berbers have been denied official recognition as a distinct minority with their own cultural heritage.

The Berbers are Muslim but few of them share the militant ideology of the FIS—the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front—which came close to winning power at the ballot-box in 1992.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Wagner's music sounds a dissonant note in Israel

By Ann LoLordo

JERUSALEM—As a doctoral student in New York, Yehudit Ezion fell captive to the music of Richard Wagner, a favorite of Adolf Hitler. Seduced by the 19th-century German composer's harmonic language, his symphonic writing, she attended every performance she could of his operas.

Today, Ezion is a musicology professor in Israel. She teaches Wagner in her classes, explaining his influence on this century's great composers. But Ezion knows that Wagner's music evokes haunting memories for many of her fellow Israelis, the survivors of the Nazi death camps. For this reason, she opposes bringing his works to the Jewish state, a question being debated once again here.

"I would not stage Wagner as long as it can offend people," said Ezion, a professor at Bar Ilan University near Tel Aviv. "It's a little premature to stage Wagner in Israel now." Ezion's feelings reflect the conundrum facing the stewards of Israel's opera company. Recently, the music director of the New Israeli Opera proposed lifting the country's self-imposed performance ban on Wagner's works. As in the past, the suggestion provoked strong feelings and emotional outbursts.

"Leave us Holocaust survivors alone with this playing of Wagner," Shevach Weiss, an Israeli lawyer who lived as a child in Nazi-occupied Poland, said during a legislative hearing on the issue. "Let us go to our world and die, and then you can play Wagner as much as you want."

The debate goes beyond the issues of artistic expression and cultural sensitivity. It speaks to the nature of Israeli society, its roots and aspirations. Israel annually remembers the Holocaust victims in a national day of mourning. As many of the country's Holocaust survivors near the end of their lives, Israel's once-strained relationship with Germany has evolved into one of allied nations. Today, the modern Jewish state trades regularly with Germany, its citizens vacation there and Israeli taxi drivers prefer Mercedes.

For decades, performing Wagner's music in Israel has been taboo because of its association with the Third Reich. Wagner wrote several anti-Semitic tracts years before Hitler was born. But it was the composer's epic, lavish operas that Hitler and his followers publicly embraced. Wagner was played often at Nazi party events and, along with other composers, in the concentration camps. The music came to symbolize the Nazi regime's grand evil plan. Although an occasional Wagner piece plays on Israel's publicly funded radio station, the music remains a potent symbol 50 years after the country's founding.

During a June 6 panel discussion on Wagner, sponsored by the New Israeli Opera Company, the audience shouted down the moderator when told a visiting baritone would sing a selection from "The Flying Dutchman." "Rape!" cried one participant. The performance was scrapped. Past attempts to perform Wagner in Israel's concert halls met a similar fate.

The Israel Philharmonic scheduled a piece for its 1966 season, but opposition kept it off the program. In 1981, Zubin Mehta, the Philharmonic's popular, Indian-born conductor, explained to an audience one evening that the orchestra's encore would be a selection from Wagner's "Tris-

tan and Isolde."

Those offended by the piece were invited to leave, but no one did. As Mehta started the prelude, some in the crowd began shouting. The orchestra eventually finished the performance—to loud applause. But the following night, a tumult ensued. Mehta recalled in a 1991 interview with the Los Angeles Times. The conductor said he stopped the concert.

In 1991, conductor Daniel Barenboim, an Israeli born in Argentina, set out to bring Wagner to Israeli concert-goers. To promote artistic expression, for the sake of music in Israel, the world-famous pianist said Wagner should be played in Israel.

The majority of Philharmonic musicians supported him. The orchestra decided to first poll its 36,000 subscribers. The suggestion got a 70 percent approval rate, but the Philharmonic felt the 30 percent who opposed the proposal was too high to ignore.

It has been a dream of conductor Asher Fisch to stage a Wagner opera in his native Israel. When Fisch assumed the music directorship of the Israel opera last year, he proposed including Wagner in the opera's repertoire to the 11-member board.

"Wagner belongs mostly in an opera house," Fisch said in a telephone interview from his home in Vienna, Austria. "It was my personal interest to break the boycott. To just let it live on without dealing with it was wrong. I personally feel the boycott is not based on knowledge anymore, and it's not based on real feelings. It's based on ignorance."

Most Israelis, Fisch contends, don't know much about Wagner's life or his music. Some of his writings are blatantly anti-Semitic, but many of his contemporaries held similar views. Richard Strauss was associated with the Nazis; his music is played here.

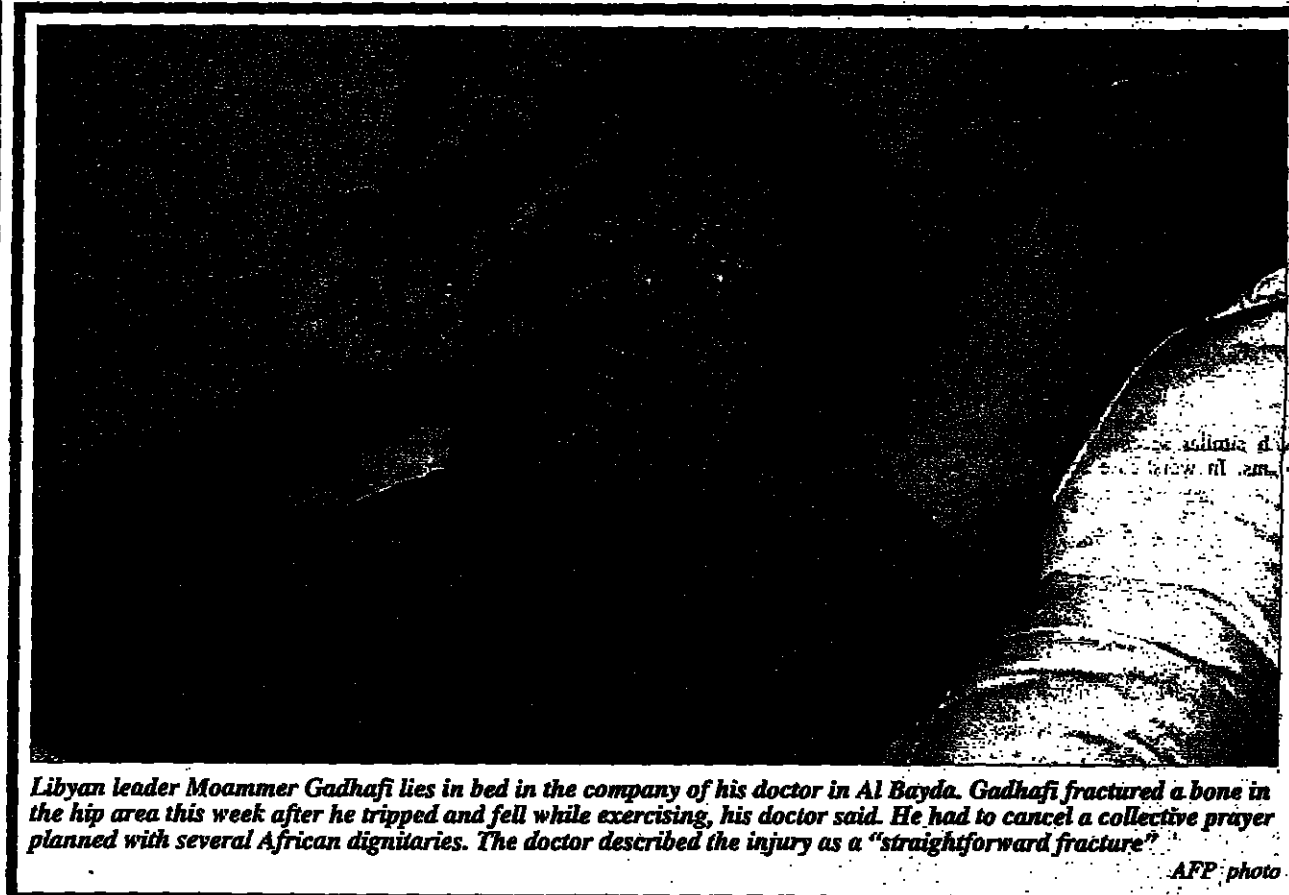
The directors of the opera's board supported Fisch's proposal, but they installed a telephone line to hear subscribers' views. The calls split almost evenly, for and against. The board will make the final decision. If it chooses to stage a Wagner opera, it won't be for another year. The coming season's program is already set.

"The boycott is against music, freedom of music and the importance of music," said Fisch, a Jew of German descent. "Wagner is so important in the history of music and opera. Nothing that came after Wagner was not influenced by Wagner. He was as important to music as Mozart and Beethoven."

The way to commemorate the memory of the Holocaust victims is not to ban Wagner from public concert halls, said Fisch, 40. He suggested staging concerts of composers who died at the Nazis' hands.

Ora Binur, the music critic for the leading Israeli daily newspaper, *Ma'ariv*, said artistic expression must be preserved in a democratic country. But in Israel, the Middle East's only democracy, being tolerant of survivors' feelings "is the most cultural act we could perform," she said. "The Israeli opera is not suffering from a lack of repertoire," said Binur. "I am a lover of Wagner's music, but it's not so important to hurt people. They can wait another five to seven years."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi lies in bed in the company of his doctor in Al Bayda. Gadhafi fractured a bone in the hip area this week after he tripped and fell while exercising, his doctor said. He had to cancel a collective prayer planned with several African dignitaries. The doctor described the injury as a "straightforward fracture."

AFP photo

Israel balks at admitting family of black US Jew

By Lee Hockstader

JERUSALEM—He was reared as a Christian and as a black in America. But in his domestic life and personal convictions, Elazar Yaisrael, a truck driver from Chicago, is as serious about Judaism as many Israeli Jews. He keeps a kosher kitchen, has studied the Torah and gave all four of his children Old Testament names.

Yaisrael, now in his early fifties, changed his name and underwent a formal conversion to Judaism 10 years ago in Los Angeles. He applied for Israeli citizenship in 1996 and, after months of red tape, received his documents.

But when he tried to immigrate to Israel in May with his wife Sarah, also a convert, four children and two grandchildren, alarm bells went off in the Israeli government. He was stopped at the airport, detained for hours and told that while he could immigrate his family was not welcome for more than a short stay.

"I've come here to live a Jewish way of life," said Yaisrael, a soft-spoken man with long gray dreadlocks and a ready smile. "I'm trying to save my children from the black situations in the (American) neighborhoods, the gangs and all that."

The Yaisraels, now living in administrative limbo under threat of deportation, are a testament to Israel's deepening confusion about who qualifies as a Jew and who, therefore, is entitled to live in the Jewish state.

The question is not only religious, legal or racial, although it is tinged with all

three. And as Israel's wealth and living standards begin to draw even with Western Europe's, the country has become more wary about who is immigrating and why.

"If any person on the basis of declaring themselves Jewish would be allowed to immigrate under the Law of Return, then anybody in a country with a GDP per capita of less than (Israel's) \$17,000 would immediately be interested in coming to Israel," said Bobby Brown, an adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In the past few years, non-Jewish immigration to Israel, legal and illegal, has soared with the arrival of more than 200,000 foreign workers and at least that many Russian immigrants with little or no connection to Judaism. For the first time in Israel's 50-year history, a significant portion of its population of nearly 6 million—perhaps 10 percent or more—is neither Jewish nor Arab.

The influx of non-Jewish immigrants has coincided with a deepening and bitter split in Israeli society between secular and religious Jews.

"It's a question of identity," said Yaron Ezrahi, a prominent Israeli political philosopher. "In the past, the state has committed itself to being a Zionist state where all Jews can experiment with all forms of Judaism. But at the same time the right-wing government is giving the Orthodox more and more control."

Among the areas of government in which Orthodox political parties have the most control is the Interior Ministry, which oversees immigration

and citizenship. When Yaisrael and his family arrived at Ben-Gurion airport on May 11, it was the Interior Ministry that raised the alarm.

Although Yaisrael and his family could have presented U.S. passports, he submitted himself as a tourist, he submitted his Israeli identity card at the airport and declared his intention to immigrate. He had spent \$10,000—much of his savings—to buy one-way air tickets for the family and to ship their household goods from Chicago. Interior Ministry officials were suspicious. Part of their concern had to do with the Black Hebrews—a sect of American blacks living in Dimona in southern Israel—who immigrated illegally, are not considered Jews and have long been a thorn in the side of the government.

Ministry officials also doubted the Yaisraels' commitment to Judaism. When they interviewed the couple's son Emanuel, 18, one official said, the youth had trouble defining Shabbat—the weekly Jewish Sabbath.

In an interview, Yaisrael mentioned the family had visited Jerusalem's Old City, he said they did not stop at the Western Wall, the only intact portion of the Jewish Temple dating from the Roman era and one of Judaism's holiest sites.

Yaisrael said he has no connection to the Black Hebrews and no intention to join them. By his account, he and his wife began their conversion with a six-month course offered by the University of Judaism while living in Los Angeles. At his conclusion, on June 20,

1988—Yaisrael's 43rd birthday—the couple was converted to Conservative Judaism by a rabbinical court.

Although Conservative Judaism—a less stringent version of the religion than Orthodoxy—is barely known in Israel, Israeli law recognizes the Jewishness of Jews converted by non-Orthodox rabbis in America. That would give them the nearly automatic right to immigrate to Israel. But Conservative Jews allege the Interior Ministry lately has been taking practical steps to impede their immigration. Interior Ministry officials refused to be interviewed on the case. Tova Ellinson, a spokeswoman for the ministry, said in a brief statement that "at the moment, no one is giving them any problem because they are tourists here."

However, the Yaisraels' tourist visas expired June 10.

The ministry has insisted all the Yaisraels except Elazar, who already has Israeli citizenship, return to the United States to apply for permission to immigrate. The family is fighting. "I moved everything here," Sarah Yaisrael said. "What would I go back to?" The family has not accused the government of racism. For now, the Yaisraels are living in Beit She'an, a lower-middle-class town a half-hour's drive west of Jerusalem. Save for a few mattresses and rugs donated by neighbors, their 3470-sq-ft apartment is mostly bare. Elazar, whose last job was as a courier in Chicago, is seeking work.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

International peace patrols coming to Kosovo

By David Holley

BELGRADE—Yugoslavia—International efforts to broker peace in Yugoslavia's strife-torn Kosovo region will enter a new stage Monday with the launch of diplomatic observer patrols, US and Russian diplomats said Sunday.

US envoy Richard Holbrooke and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Nikolai Afanasyevsky, speaking to reporters after a joint meeting with moderate ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova in Kosovo's capital, Pristina, stressed that Washington and Moscow are working together to define the crisis.

"Our goals are the same: a negotiated peaceful settlement to the Kosovo problem," Holbrooke said.

Monday's initial "symbolic" patrol will include the American charge d'affaires in Belgrade, Richard Miles, and the Russian and British ambassadors, Holbrooke said.

"We look forward to that (patrol)," Holbrooke said Sunday after returning to Belgrade for more than three hours of talks with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic during which the patrols were a key topic.

Holbrooke stressed that in the talks with Rugova and at an earlier news conference in Pristina, he and Afanasyevsky "spoke with one voice on the core concepts: that Kosovo is a part of Yugoslavia, that peaceful settlement is essential and that Dr. Rugova is the main Kosovo leader with whom we all deal."

"It's not my job here to outline a specific solution," Holbrooke added. "But some change in the current status of Kosovo within the international boundaries of Yugoslavia is essential in our view."

The patrols, which are expected to visit scattered trouble spots, are a key feature of an agreement reached by Milosevic and Russian President Boris Yeltsin in Moscow on June 16.

The joint Yugoslav-Russian declaration was first seen as potentially undercutting US-led efforts to pass a UN Security Council resolution to withdraw its "security" forces from the troubled region.

But since mid-June, US attention has shifted toward the more immediate goal of a cease-fire between the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav forces and the raging but rapidly growing Kosovo Liberation Army, or KLA, which demands independence for the region. One key purpose of the diplomatic observer patrols will be to deter attacks on civilians by either side.

"Those patrols will become routine, integrated multinational



A Serb policeman observes the area from an armed check point in Srbica this week, as diplomats accredited to Belgrade conducted their first monitoring mission to inspect the situation in the Drenica area, a stronghold of Albanian separatists in the northern part of Kosovo. Serbian forces are locked in a conflict with ethnic Albanian separatists who claim to control nearly a third of Kosovo.

efforts for a long time," Holbrooke said. "I think that this will be important for peace, stability and security in the region," Afanasyevsky said.

More than 300 people have died since late February in clashes between Serbian forces and the 90 percent majority ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo, which is technically a province of Serbia, the larger of the two republics that remain in the Yugoslav federation since it split after the fall of Communism. Sentiment among ethnic Albanians leans strongly toward independence, but Milosevic has vowed to allow no further breakup of Yugoslavia.

Concerns are widespread that all-out war in Kosovo could spread to neighboring Albania and Macedonia, which has a large ethnic Albanian minority with similar secessionist sentiments. In worst-case scenarios, even Greece and Turkey could be drawn into a spiraling Balkan conflict.

The broad outlines of an international strategy for peace in Kosovo have become clearer in recent days. Holbrooke's current focus is to push ethnic Albanian leaders toward uniting sufficiently to exert authority over KLA fighters and engage in negotiations with the leadership in Belgrade, the capital of both Serbia and Yugoslavia.

A key problem, however, is

that it might not be possible for anyone to control all the independent fighters now in the field. "It's clear that some of the people (with guns) are local and some are organized in various ways," Holbrooke explained. "But we don't know what the organizations are, and no one has yet stepped forward who says, 'We have control over these groups.'" As part of the effort to strengthen the authority of civilian Albanian leadership, Holbrooke met over the weekend with representatives of all 16 ethnic Albanian political parties, urging them to form a more unified stance in preparation for possible peace talks.

The so-called Contact Group of countries dealing most directly with the crisis—the United States, Russia, Britain, France, Germany and Italy—is pressing both the ethnic Albanian side and the Yugoslav government to accept some kind of settlement that would give genuine autonomy to Kosovo but not outright independence. One possible solution that would fit US goals would be for Kosovo to be separated from the Serbian republic and become one of three republics in Yugoslavia along with Serbia and Montenegro. Ethnic Albanian leaders—not to mention the KLA—currently reject such a solution, but some observers believe they might be persuaded

to accept it as part of a peace settlement.

In Berlin on Saturday, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said the Contact Group nations should draw up an autonomy proposal for Kosovo.

"We should draw up an outline within the Contact Group for autonomy because it is apparent that neither side is in a position to do this," Kinkel said. "We then have to consider in the Contact Group how we can guarantee autonomy." The Con-

tact Group is scheduled to meet Wednesday in Bonn. Meanwhile, the threat of force by NATO of other intervention hangs over any side unwilling to accept a peace deal. That threat has been mainly directed against Belgrade. But Richard Gelbard, a special U.S. envoy on Kosovo, said Saturday in London that Washington could also take action against the guerrillas if they refuse to talk peace.

AFP photo

LA Times-Washington Post

Pakistan may sign test ban without India

By Farhan Bokhari and Mark Nicholson

SENIOR PAKISTANI officials say a decision to sign the International Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would be taken irrespective of what neighbouring India might do. Islamabad's decision to detach CTBT policy from New Delhi marks a significant shift in the Pakistan's foreign policy, which for decades has been driven by what India does first.

For almost two decades successive Pakistani governments have insisted that the country would only comply with international treaties, such as the CTBT or the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), if India did so simultaneously.

At the weekend, Pakistan's foreign office confirmed the government had begun a "strategic review" of the CTBT and had decided to keep its options open.

Tariq Altuf, foreign office spokesman, said: "We do not have to be tied down and have therefore undertaken a strategic review of our position with regard to CTBT." He also said, "There can be no linkages (to India) in a watertight sense. We will take decisions that will suit our interests."

India's Bharatiya Janata party-led government has said it will not sign the CTBT in its current form, maintaining the long-held position of previous Indian governments in rejecting the "flawed" treaty. Delhi has argued that the cur-

rent treaty enshrines a "nuclear apartheid" by defining nuclear weapons status as the exclusive preserve of the five established nuclear powers.

Analysts say the government repositioning on CTBT could also be a precursor to a hardening of official policy. A senior government official

announcement coincided with remarks by Sartaj Aziz, finance minister, who said if western multilateral assistance was curtailed, Pakistan would experience difficulties in meeting external debt repayments on \$43bn debt.

Pakistan's debt repayments between July and September are almost \$900m, marginally

below its foreign exchange reserves

of \$913m last week, which are only enough to pay for about four weeks of imports. Many analysts say the government would need to find new sources of credit soon to plan for an estimated \$5.6bn in loan repayments during the next 12 months. Mr Aziz said, "The threat to multilateral aid would be the gravest impact of the sanctions."

The threat of sanctions by the US, Japan and European countries has already led many analysts to forecast a substantial drop in foreign assistance for infrastructure projects.

Analysts in Karachi say the decision to detach any move on CTBT from India's actions may be designed to build up "foreign political credit" before a unilateral moratorium on its foreign debt payments. The government estimates that Pakistan could lose up to half of its \$3bn in foreign assistance this year under the impact of western sanctions.

said: "We don't want to be caught if India suddenly springs a surprise and decides to sign the CTBT with some changes in the treaty. We don't want to be pushed into an agreement just because Delhi suddenly comes round to it."

Reasons for Pakistan's change of mind are not immediately clear, though the threat of a widening economic crunch, in the wake of western sanctions following its nuclear tests in May, could be one, analysts said.

The foreign office

Financial Times Syndication



Veenbos/Der Standard/Vienna

Hong Kong bids farewell to its thrill ride

By Maggie Farley

HONG KONG—Dragon Air Flight 841 from Chongqing, China, was the final airplane to perform the famous white-knuckle landing here late Sunday night. Thousands of Hong Kong residents clustered on rooftops to watch the jet skim just overhead and touch down on a runway reclaimed from the sea.

Monday morning, Hong Kong's new, \$20 billion international airport replaced the 73-year-old, all-thrills, no-frills Kai Tak.

"Kai Tak has truly been one of the world's great airports," said Hong Kong's Civil Aviation Director Richard Siegel after the last plane landed and the last plane took off. "But tonight it's time to say goodbye to an old friend."

Just past midnight, with the flick of a switch, the lights of the single runway winked out, and the rush to prepare the Chep Lap Kok airport to open began in earnest. Somewhere out there, in the air on the way from New York, was a jumbo jet expecting to land at Hong Kong's new facility at 6:20 this morning.

In that six-hour window, by air, land and sea, Hong Kong transferred 30 airplanes and a parade of ungainly airport equipment—plane pushers and moving staircases—22 miles from the old airport to the new one, so no one would miss a flight. And slightly ahead of schedule, Cathay Pacific's non-stop flight from New York landed at Chep Lap Kok at sunrise as if the airport had been there for years.

Many passengers and the 350,000 residents who lived under the flight path won't miss the harrowing landings at Kai Tak that are now just memories.

Approaching aircraft are bound by a mountain on one side, the harbor on the other and, one of the world's most densely populated areas in between. Aircraft bank sharply over South China Sea and zoom so low over high-rise apartment blocks, passengers can see what's playing on residents' TVs.

"Most runways are just a straight-on approach, but this one requires a lot of tight maneuvering that really stretched the capabilities of marginal pilots," said aviation expert Jim Eckes of Indowisw Aviation in Hong Kong. "Had an airplane ever gone down in Kowloon where it is so crowded, you would have had one of the worst aviation disasters in history."

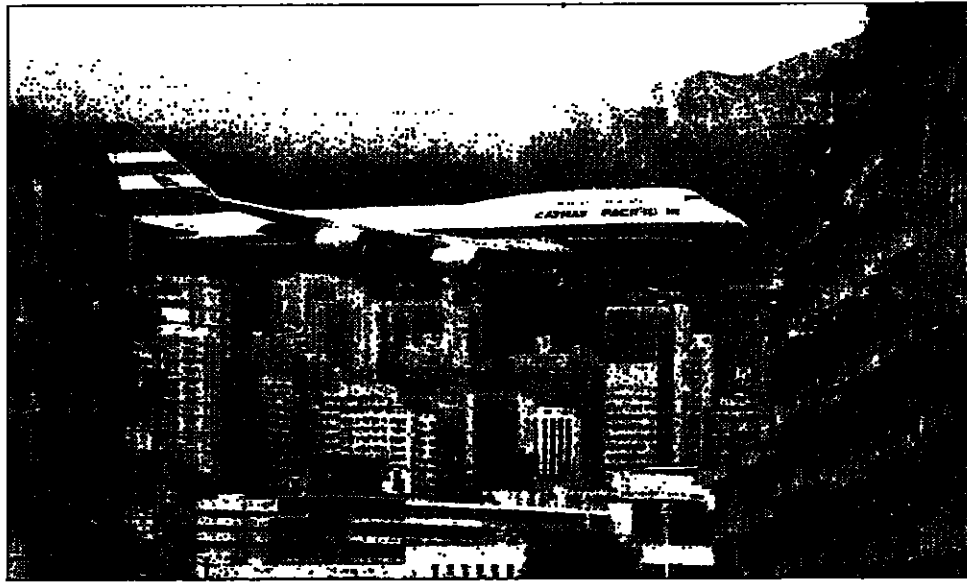
Japan Airlines Capt. Shuichi Imoto is one who will miss it. The Kai Tak approach was one of the few landings that pilots had to train specially for, they were required to switch off their autopilots and guide their craft down manually.

"It's very dangerous, so your mind is very sharp," said Imoto, who had one of the last landings at Kai Tak and was scheduled to pilot one of the first takeoffs this morning. "It is one of the last exciting landings."

At the new airport, the landing may be boringly straightforward, but Chep Lap Kok has its own excitement. The most expensive airport project in the world, Chep Lap Kok was designed to give Hong Kong an economic, political—and philosophical—boost.

"The spaces are of heroic scale," said British architect Norman Foster, who designed the new airport, during a press tour last week. "I consider it a horizontal cathedral."

Recalling that the mountains his helicopter landed on during



A Boeing 747-400 jumbo jet, belonging to Hong Kong flag carrier Cathay Pacific, flies over the Kai Tak Airport control tower as it approaches the Runway 13, on the 73-year-old airport's final day in operation last week.

AFP photo

a survey of the site have now been pushed into the sea to create a flat platform of reclaimed land for Chep Lap Kok. Foster noted that the airport's creation was an epic feat of engineering as well. It is part of 10 massive infrastructure projects—linking the airport to the city.

"I can't think of anywhere else that would take a major international airport, close it down and open another the next day on land which had to be created," he said.

Foster designed the new terminal as a celebration of sky, light and air. A pilot himself, he wanted to avoid the Las Vegas-like vacuum of time and place that plagues many air terminals.

"For so many airports, your first contact with flight is the

end of a tube, where you might get a glimpse of an aircraft hull around a loose-fitting rubber gasket," Foster said. "Here, this is all about the experience of flight."

From the sky, the terminal is the shape of an airplane, with the long arrival hall jutting out like wings and the aircraft gates lined up along the terminal's body and tail. On the ground, giant windows let in sweeping views of the sea, mountains and airplanes, naturally guiding passengers toward their gates.

Hong Kong has long needed a new airport. The city is within a six-hour flight of half of the world's population, and tiny Kai Tak handled 28 million passengers a year, turning away many potential departures because the one-runway facility didn't have the room.

The new airport will be able to handle 35 million passengers a year. After the second runway is completed in October, Hong Kong can eventually have as many as 87 million travelers a year.

British leaders conceived the new airport to create confidence and jobs in Hong Kong after the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown in Beijing, which sparked a mass exodus of residents here. Beijing immediately denounced the project, which it claimed was a ploy devised by the British to drain the territory's coffers before they handed Hong Kong back to China in 1997.

Chep Lap Kok was half-completed by the time Britain and Beijing settled their feud over financing in 1993. Hong Kong paid the entire cost out of its reserves.

The political delays were costly, however, and now analysts call the opening of the airport in the middle of the region's economic turmoil the worst possible timing.

"The irony is that this huge public works project caused great inflation in Hong Kong, which has made it too expensive for most tourists in the region, especially now," said analyst Eckes. "Now there's a price to pay." Airport authorities had counted on higher fees from a growing number of tourists and cargo shippers to pay off the mega-project. The landing cost for a Boeing 747 is about \$4,650, compared with about \$4,230 at Kai Tak. Freight handling charges will go up about 30 percent, and the opening of several new airports in the region has caused concerns that shippers will turn to newly opened, cheaper terminals in Shenzhen, China; Singapore; Macao, China; or the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur.

LA Times-Washington Post

News Services

LA Times-Washington Post

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Political aftershocks rumble on after Turkish earthquake

By John Barham

THE EARTHQUAKE that killed 144 people in southern Turkey nine days ago lasted a few minutes. The aftershock of national indignation at politicians and developers, whom the media have accused of causing dozens of deaths by flouting precautions, shows no sign of diminishing.

The earthquake destroyed or rendered uninhabitable about a third of the buildings in and around the cities of Adana and Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast. It was followed by two tremors last Saturday that injured hundreds of people.

Engineers say many buildings used poor-quality reinforcing bars and skimped on cement. Local politicians ignored advice not to allow high-rise buildings in an area prone to earthquakes.

Sadi Surenkok, president of the local chamber of engineers, said: "When we asked the mayor of Ceyhan not to give permission for buildings with more than five floors, he said, 'I will not allow the people to be crushed by engineers.'"

Schools and hospitals were among the buildings worst affected by the earthquake, raising suspicions that politicians took bribes to turn a blind eye to building irregularities.

Prosecutors have ordered the detention of 14 builders accused of causing death by negligence and lack of care. Critics say investigations should be broadened to include local and national authorities.

Gungor Mengi, a columnist on the best-selling and normally pro-government newspaper Sabah, wrote: "Contractors control the [central] government and land mafias control the municipalities."

The state is on the side of the thieves. The earthquake makes all the more obvious the ills we must get rid of. Turkey's assertive media frequently attack official corruption and incompetence, although to little effect. When an earthquake in 1992 left 485 dead in the eastern town of Erzincan, the media charged that many buildings had been sub-standard. In 1995 an earthquake devastated the town of Dinar in central Turkey, killing 100 people and destroying half its buildings.

Seismologists fear lack of preparation and poorly constructed buildings could cause extensive loss of life and damage should an earthquake hit Istanbul, Turkey's largest city, with about 10m people.

Ozal Yuzugullu, an earthquake engineer at Istanbul's Kandilli seismic research institute, said: "We know that more than 50 per cent of construction in Istanbul is not officially controlled. [An earthquake] would be a disaster."

It is impossible to predict when a big earthquake will hit Istanbul, but the institute expects the next quake to measure 7.5 on the Richter scale. The Adana/Ceyhan quake measured 6.3.

Mr Yuzugullu said the institute could not find sufficient funding to develop a master plan for Istanbul to prepare for an earthquake. In contrast, Izmir, a port on the Aegean Sea, had commissioned a full-scale earthquake plan from Kandilli.

Politicians are under pressure to ease enforcement of building controls. Millions of migrants are overwhelming Turkey's cities as they flee rural poverty or violence in the Kurdish south-east, where guerrillas are fighting a Stums and hastily built

tower blocks have sprung up around cities, often on land seized by gangsters with good political connections. Ahmet Isikara, Kandilli's director, said the poor "are not aware of the risk. They just want a home." Furthermore, local authorities and those who elect them have more immediate concerns than preparing for earthquakes, such as providing water and electricity or building schools and hospitals.

The Adana/Ceyhan earthquake may further erode confidence that Turkey's rulers can act in the best interests of the people, and will strengthen the hand of those clamouring for radical change, particularly the Islamists, who already form Turkey's biggest opposition group.

Financial Times Syndication

Black Youth's '93 slaying lays bare race tensions in Britain

By Vainora Bennett

LONDON—Stephen Lawrence and a friend, both black and 18, were waiting for a bus home in a rough part of southeast London on the night of April 22, 1993, when a group of white youths attacked them, punching, kicking and yelling racial epithets.

Passers-by remember a scuffle. The white youths ran one way. The victims tried to run the other. But Lawrence was bleeding too heavily to go far. He died, of two stab wounds, before an ambulance arrived.

In the five years since, Lawrence has become the most famous black murder victim in British history. His death has exposed the persistent racial tensions of a society that likes to think of itself as cheerfully multicultural. It also has exposed the inadequacy of the overwhelmingly white police in investigating such crimes.

The dogged quest of Lawrence's parents to speed up a sluggish police investigation and bring to trial the five

white men who are the chief suspects has drawn support from South African President Nelson Mandela, black activist groups and, increasingly, the general public.

The five suspects were arrested weeks after the killing when Lawrence's parents complained that the police were doing little to investigate aggression against blacks. But Neil Acourt, his brother Jamie Acourt, David Norris, Gary Dobson and Luke Knight, all now in their 20s, are free again today.

The original police case was twice dismissed for lack of evidence. In 1995, the Lawrences began their own "private prosecution," a rare procedure in Britain. Again, a judge ruled that the evidence was inadequate. Because of double jeopardy, the suspects cannot be tried again for the crime.

The police have now apologized to Lawrence's parents for mishandling the case. And last week, the five men were forced to testify about where

they were on the night of Lawrence's death. Their testimony came during a public inquiry into where the police went wrong in the case; the men's guilt or innocence cannot legally be discussed.

Feelings are running high over the case. After Jamie Acourt arrived to testify last week, a dozen members of the Nation of Islam activist group invaded the inquiry room. Outside, it was pandemonium, with police firing tear gas at demonstrators.

On Tuesday, more protesters outside the courtroom hurled bottles and eggs at the police and yelled, "Racists!" and "You protect murderers!"

The shocking details of the case began seeping into public consciousness last year, when the Daily Mail tabloid newspaper published photographs of the five men, with their crew cuts and dark glasses, and a detailed expose under this screaming banner headline: "Murderers." The five did nothing to defend themselves

until last week, when they issued a statement saying they were innocent.

Evidence now under discussion includes a police surveillance video of the five. It showed them using racist language and talking about shooting black people, skinning them and setting them alight. It never appeared in court. The Lawrences' lawyer, Michael Mansfield, has argued that the tapes revealed a group of extreme racists obsessed with knives. The five deny that they are racist.

Brian Cathcart, a journalist covering the case, said he believes that the failures of policing on display at the inquiry are at last making Britain examine its collective conscience. "In many ways, police failures reflect the wider failures of the population they serve," he said. "If we took race crime more seriously, then the police would."

LA Times-Washington Post

News Services

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 11 — 17 July

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Family Dog (Cartoon)
 3:30—I Wanna Be...
 4:00—Neighbors
 4:30—Ocean Wilds (Doc.)
 5:00—French Prog. (Doc.)
 6:00—Acapulco Bay
 7:00—News in French
 7:30—French Prog.
 7:35—You Bet Your Life
 8:00—Prison (Talk Show)
 8:30—Sirens (Police Drama)
 9:30—News At Ten
 10:00—World Cup
 11:45—Feature Film

SUNDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Pumpkin Patch
 3:30—The Pink Panther
 3:30—The Adventure of the Black Stallion
 4:00—The American Chart Show (Music)
 5:00—Super Star Sport (Doc.)
 6:00—French Prog.
 7:00—News in French
 7:30—News Headlines
 7:35—Life's most Embarrassing Moments
 8:00—Football Summary
 8:30—Challenges (Talk Show)
 9:10—Renegade (Drama)
 10:00—News At Ten
 10:30—Correll
 12:00—The History of Rock 'n' Roll

MONDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Highlander (Cartoon)
 3:30—The Worst Day of My Life (Drama)
 4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
 4:30—Last Frontiers (Doc.)
 5:00—French Prog.
 6:00—Acapulco Bay
 7:00—News in French



Family Matters, Thursday at 7:35pm.

7:15—French Prog.
 7:30—News Headlines
 7:35—Hope and Gloria
 8:00—War Lords (Doc.)
 9:10—Good Guys, Bad Guys
 10:00—News At Ten
 10:30—Law & Order
 11:10—Bay Watch Nights

TUESDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Pro Stars
 3:30—Small Talk
 4:00—Border Town (Drama)
 4:30—Baby It's You

5:00—The Route of Capricorn
 6:00—French Program
 7:00—News in French
 7:15—French Programs
 7:30—News Headlines
 7:35—Step by Step
 8:00—What would you do?
 8:30—The Sculptress
 9:30—News in English
 10:00—World Cup
 11:45—Feature Film

WEDNESDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 4634149): That Old Filling
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 4634149): In Love 7 War
- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): As Good As It Gets
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): Air Bud
- Plaza (Tel: 5699238): Titanic
- Concord I (Tel: 5677420): Vegas Vacation
- Concord II (Tel: 5677420): Conspiracy Theory

3:10—Mr Bogus Show
 3:30—Castle of Adventures
 4:00—The Album Show
 5:00—Ushuaia (French Doc.)
 6:15—Acapulco Bay
 7:00—News in French
 7:15—French Programs
 7:30—Buddies (Comedy)
 8:00—Envoyé Spécial
 8:30—Kung-Fu
 9:30—News in English
 10:00—World Cup
 11:45—The Seekers

THURSDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Dinky Dis (Cartoon)
 3:30—The Animal Park
 4:00—French Doc.
 4:30—Blue Water Dreaming
 5:00—NBA Games
 6:15—Sliders (Luck of the draw)
 7:00—News in French
 7:15—French Programs
 7:30—News Headlines
 7:35—Family Matters
 8:00—Football Summary
 8:30—Dr Quinn Medicine Woman
 9:10—Oprah Winfrey
 10:00—News At Ten
 10:30—Feature Film

FRIDAY
 3:00—Holy Koran
 3:10—Teddy Ruxpin
 3:30—Wishbone
 4:00—Feature Film
 6:15—De Fort Boyard
 7:00—News in French
 7:15—French Program
 7:30—News Headlines
 7:35—The Fresh Prince of Bel Air
 8:00—The Footsteps of Alexander the Great
 8:30—The Brain
 9:10—Babylon 5

Programs are subject to change by JTV

10:00—News at Ten
 10:30—The Seekers

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS
SAMEDI
 17:00—Fant pas rêver
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—Magazine
 L'œuf de Colomb

DIMANCHE
 18:00—Bonne espérance
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—E-M6

LUNDI
 17:00—Thalassé
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—Cinq sur Cinq

MARDI
 18:00—Les cœurs brûlés (10)
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—Fractales

MERCREDI
 17:00—Ushuaia
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—E-M6
 20:00—Envoyé spécial

JEUDI
 16:00—L'école des fans
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—Atomes crochus

VENREDI
 17:30—Fort Boyard
 19:00—Le Journal
 19:15—Aldé la Terre

Music

Is anyone out there really listening?

By Robert Hillburn

THE ARTISTIC community in pop doesn't deserve a very high mark for its work so far this year, but pop consumers deserve an even lower score. Artists: C. Consumers: F.

Retailers must be pleased because album sales across the country are up nearly 9 percent from last year. This can be traced largely to middlebrow (or worse) collections that reflect little of the boldness or depth that you'd like to see dominating the national pop agenda.

'Titanic' has led the way by selling more than 8 million copies, mostly to fans who fell in love with the blockbuster film. Without the movie tie, the album would have been lucky to sell 1 percent of that figure.

The only album close to 'Titanic' in sales this year doesn't offer any cheer. Celine Dion's 'Let's Talk About Love,' which has sold more than 4 million copies (in addition to the 3 million it already sold last year) is so shamelessly overblown that you'd think that a record company would have to strap people in a chair to get them to listen to it. There's also, the parade of mostly anonymous soundtracks, lightweight pop (the Backstreet Boys, Spice Girls), exploitation rap (Master P), and lightweight country-pop (Shania Twain).

Here are my highlights (by category) from the last six months:

RAP — Public Enemy's *He Got Game* (Def Jam). In this soundtrack for the Spike Lee movie, the greatest rap group ever returns to top form, mixing a variety of topics (from the game of basketball to the game of rap to the game of life) with dazzling sleight-of-hand that is as thoughtful as it is superbly crafted.

ROCK — Pearl Jam's *Yield* (Epic). Pearl Jam's continuing artistic advance is one of the great stories in rock. This is a group that has pursued its creative instincts to forge a more graceful and purposeful sound for its tales of personal and spiritual quest—even though that very manly and growth have cost the band warehouse loads of sales because its musical sophistication has moved far beyond its early angst-driven fan base.

MOODY SOUNDScape — Tricky's *Anthony & the Brown Snakes* (Island).

Unlike the generally positive tone of most of the other midyear selections, the feeling here is moody and foreboding; raw expressions of anguish and dread that touch on both personal and social turmoil.

SINGER-SONGWRITER — Peter Case's *Full Service No Waiting* (Vanguard).

Case's music combines the pessimism of

the blues and the optimism of folk, and there are moments when he captures the enduring spirit of both fields. The songs are about chasing elusive dreams, and they're bound to make you think about your own.

MOST IMPROVED — Madonna's *Ray of Light* (Maverick/Warner Bros.).

The debate over this record doesn't so much deal with its content as its credibility. Is its confessional, spiritual emphasis honest or simply another Madonna pose? Whatever your take is, she and writer-producer William Orbit deliver her best album—one whose highlights have the convincing feel of a woman truly taking inventory in her life.

BAND DEBUT — Ozomatli's *Ozomatli* (ALMO Sounds).

Not since Los Lobos has a band come out of Los Angeles with Latin-based textures as joyous as this. The multi-ethnic outfit occasionally adds hip-hop touches to the mix, but they're not what makes Ozomatli special.

SINGER-SONGWRITER DEBUT — Rufus Wainwright's *Rufus Wainwright* (DreamWorks).

This sparkling young talent draws upon an unusually wide range of sensibilities, from show tunes to cabaret, to brighten his well-crafted and revealing love songs. The purpose of these aggressive arrangements isn't to shield the emotion, but to underscore the mystery and complexity of relationships.

COUNTRY — Mike Ireland & Holler's *Learning How to Live* (Sub Pop).

There has been so little of value out of Nashville this year that they ought to drape some mourning banners around the buildings on Music City Row. To find something with any bite, you have to turn to this honky-tonk collection from the indie Seattle label that gave us Nirvana.

R&B — Maxwell's *Embrya* (Columbia).

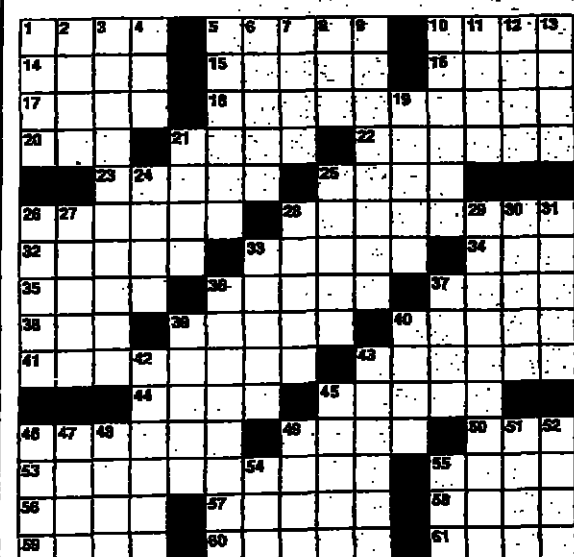
It's fitting that the cover photo shows Maxwell under water. There's a floating, sensual quality to this spectacularly stylish album. The lyrics are a little too New Age, but Maxwell's singing and the arrangements live up to the marvelous promise of his 1996 debut.

REISSUE — Tom Waits' *Beautiful Maladies* (Island).

A revealing and rewarding package. Waits hasn't downplayed the twisted, eccentric elements in his music, but he has surrounded them with the accessibility and warmth of his more straightforward pieces in ways that bring out the beauty and wonder in both approaches.

LA Times-Washington Post

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CROSS
 1 Lady of rank
 5 Danish
 10 Garden den
 14 One approach
 15 Cream of the
 16 Rags
 17 Holland sight
 18 Puke out the
 20 "for the money"
 21 Paddy plant
 22 Queen of mystery
 23 Show appreciation
 25 Auctioneer's arm
 26 Section shelter
 28 Move with urgency
 30 Fill with awe
 33 Fischer's game
 34 Baggie
 35 Michael's confession
 36 "Love..." old

TV show
 36 Call up
 37 Smeat, for one
 38 "and ye shall receive"
 39 Prattle
 40 hand (help)
 41 Conversion meanings
 43 Particular styles
 44 Latin native
 45 Certain African
 46 Gail's sister
 48 Ford plant
 50 Kind of jazz
 53 Gets a move on
 55 Up to the task
 56 Ticks partner
 57 Court event
 58 Professional changes
 59 Scrooge's sounds
 60 Contest prize
 61 House gift

DOWN
 1 Stupid fellow
 2 Released
 3 Bonfire at
 4 Storm center
 5 Puma or cheetah
 6 Smart, (wise) guy
 7 1901 film
 8 "a wonderful home"
 9 Practice a role
 10 Glorification
 11 Fairy tale
 12 To do
 13 Catch site of
 14 Sarcasm
 15 Fitzgibbon
 21 Current fashion
 24 Indiscreet
 25 Public life
 26 Eloquent
 27 Eminent
 28 Garlie

29 Poor off
 30 Mague corn
 31 Bonfire at
 32 at
 33 Inane
 34 Objects
 35 Bumper boob
 36 Rascal number
 37 Mustelid
 38 Home
 39 Quavers
 40 Quavers group
 41 "House" (quavers)
 42 Ad. line
 43 Indem neighbor
 44 Barmy
 45 Broad spread
 46 Annoying person
 47 Masseur display
 48 Toward the stem

-This Week's- HOROSCOPES

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The sun is in Cancer now, shifting the focus to domestic matters. This phase will be in effect for approximately 30 days, causing most of us to want to spend more time at home.

Aries (March 21-April 19)—Study hard. You'll use what you learn as quickly as you assimilate it. A friend needs your attention.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)—Count your money and then go shopping. You need a few new tools and books to learn about in upcoming assignment.

Gemini (May 21-June 21)—You're almost in control of the situation, but your grasp is beginning to slip. Move quickly, to secure the territory you've already taken.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)—You may feel pressured but it's natural. You're about to emerge from your chrysalis, that's all. The push you get will simply help you take off and fly.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)—Your team is practically invincible. Your encouragement is a big help. You may feel like something is gaining on you, however.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)—Hold onto your hat. Changes are coming fast and furious, from the top. Things are in a state of flux. Your friends have some good ideas — go along for the ride.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)—You're sharp as a tack. Practice your favorite foreign language — you may get a chance to use it. You'll be asked some tough questions.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)—Money, money, money. That's your theme. Make the most of it. Love and travel dominate, not necessarily in that order.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)—Your partner has the great ideas but the money being spent is partly yours. Better go along on that shopping trip!

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)—Work, work, work. That's supposed to be your idea of fun, right? You'll find out. Your partner will be very demanding.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)—A conversation could lead to romance. Once you have that out of the way, launch into a project together.

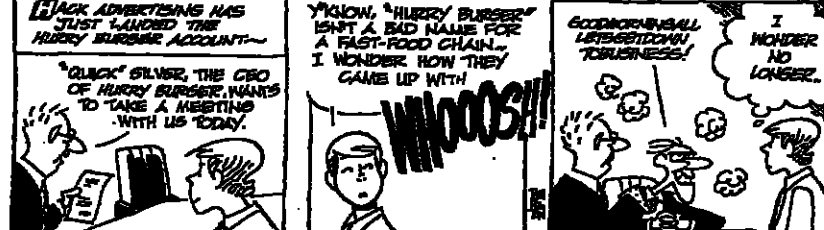
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)—Home and family are on your mind. You're in a sensitive mood, too. Go ahead and get a sensitive matter talked out. You'll all feel better afterwards.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Your theme for this year is completion, especially pertaining to paperwork. Once you get an old matter settled you'll take off like a rocket. Put your secret thoughts down on paper this year. It'll be amazingly empowering.

PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



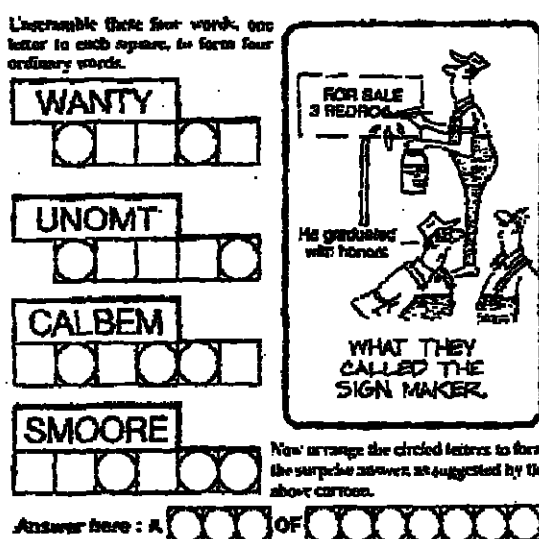
ELWOOD by Ben Thompson & Tom Forman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Jumble



Answers: TAWNY MOUNT BHCALM MOROSE

Answer: What they called the sign maker — A MAN OF LETTERS

Words of Wisdom

An argument cannot occur if one of the two parties refuses to take part.

Why do people want to conceal their poverty when they're young and brag about it when they're older?

The wise person chooses to want less rather than to have more.

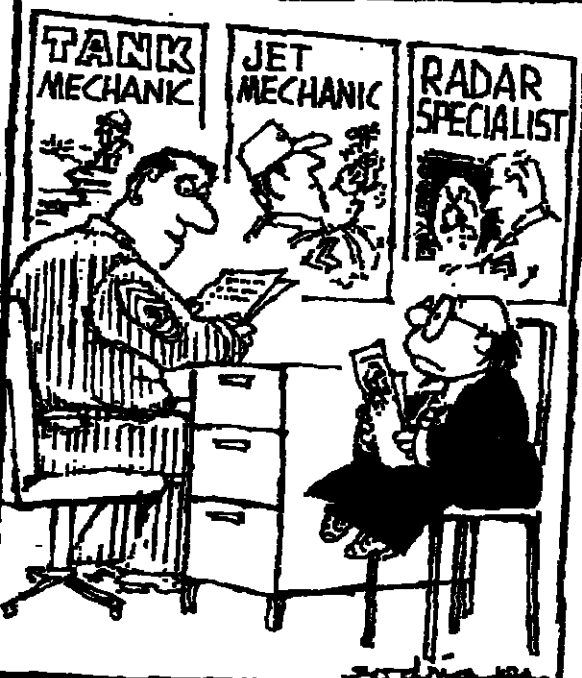
It isn't enough for a gardener to love flowers; he or she also must hate the weeds.

If you stoop to deal with idiots on their level, they will beat you every time.

When laws are not clear, they become corrupt in their interpretation.

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CHARLIE



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Models

An unrealistic ideal

By Don Oldenburg

DO AMERICANS need a warning label on advertisements and catalogs that display sleek and sexy models? Maybe one that reads: "Health Hazard: Models May Appear Thinner Than Physically Advisable."

According to mental health experts who measure how dissatisfied people are with their bodies and looks, the public needs to be cautioned about the unrealistic standards of beauty that reside in our culture today. Thumb through any women's magazine, turn on the television, check out the seemingly harmless department-store ads in the newspaper: What you find are images of our physical ideal—slender, attractive, bony models.

"The thin body is the American ideal of attractiveness and beauty," says Patricia Owen, professor of psychology at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. "It is the body, not so much the face or hair, that women are cueing into."

The trouble is that women are measuring themselves against picture-perfect exemplars of physical aesthetics who are getting thinner than ever. In some cases, they are underweight to the point of being unhealthy.

In the mid '70s, groundbreaking research that studied the dimensions and weight of Playboy centerfolds and Miss America contestants first identified "the thin body" as the American ideal of female attractiveness. Not exactly a profound finding? Perhaps not, but when follow-up studies in the mid '80s revisited the same measurements of beauty, reports Owen, one of the conclusions was that the envied Playboy centerfolds "could get no thinner."

In increasing numbers, ordinary women struggle to conform to an ideal of slender body, some muscle definition and prominent breasts, the studies also found. When women failed, they suffered unhappiness and disappointment with their own bodies. "Study after study has shown that about 80 percent of American women are dissatisfied with their bodies," says Owen.

Last year, Owen and researcher Erika Lauren set out

to update what our culture sees as the female ideal for this decade. Once again, they noted the vital statistics of Playboy centerfolds. But because the Miss America pageant stopped releasing body measurement data, Owen had to find another measurement for today's models. She found it on the Internet, where the rapidly increasing number of model agency Web sites promote their models with photographs and body statistics.

"I found that the thinness standard is still here," says Owen of the more than 500 professional models whose statistics she collected from the Internet. These weren't skin-and-bones high-fashion models or celebrity super models, she adds, but rather models women are most likely to compare themselves with, the ones who appear in women's magazines, print and TV advertisements, fashion catalogs, and newspaper ads.

In her study, "Weight and Shape Ideals: Thin is Dangerously In," instead of comparing models with average women, Owen measures models against

medical norms for unhealthy weights. Her findings: almost a half of the Playboy centerfolds and a little more than a third of the "Internet models" met malnutrition criteria for being severely underweight.

"With reference to anorexia, over a fourth of the Playboy centerfolds met one of the weight criteria, and almost a fourth of the Internet models met those criteria," says Owen, adding that the Playboy centerfolds are indeed thinner now than a decade ago. "If these models are 'exemplars' of ideal beauty, then women are aiming for beautiful, starvation-level thinness."

To complicate body-dissatisfaction issues further, while omnipresent images of slim and sexy models drive many women into self-esteem crises, Americans are simultaneously suffering a health crisis of obesity. But studies show women who are normal weight, even underweight, commonly perceive themselves as overweight.

"This is not a contest," warns Thomas Cash, professor of psychology at Old Dominion

University, in Norfolk, and one of the pioneering researchers in physical attractiveness and body dissatisfaction.

At the American Psychological Society conference last month in Washington, Yale University psychologist Alan Feingold presented his findings that body dissatisfaction had increased more sharply for women. "Males are more satisfied with their bodies than females," Feingold concluded in his research. "The strongest trend involved increasing numbers of women among (those) individuals who were the most dissatisfied with their bodies."

Cash calls it "wholesale body dissatisfaction," separating those whose view of their overall looks is negative from those dissatisfied with some part of their looks.

"Everywhere women turn, 'ideal' female images abound," says Cash. "Constant exposure to those images is clearly detrimental to the body-image well-being of women—particularly to young women."

Women more psychologically invested in their appear-

ance suffer the most, and in extreme cases are at risk to eating and other disorders. "Those women who on a day-to-day basis ask 'how attractive am I' have to answer 'I really don't measure up. I guess I'm not beautiful,'" says Cash.

Figuring people might be more likely to seek help in the privacy of their homes, Cash wrote "The Body Image Workbook: An 8-step Program for Learning to Like Your Look" (New Harbinger, \$17.95). In it, he tries to help readers find a healthy middle ground between unhealthy self-perceptions and their actual physical weight. He says he also tries to take the desperation out of losing weight.

"I'm not promising people a rose garden," says Cash. "It is hard work to change (ingrained) thought patterns and behavior. It is hard work to face what makes us uncomfortable. This is not one of those things you're going to flip through before you go to sleep and say I feel better."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Secrets of the well-dressed man

By Mimi Avin

GETTING DRESSED isn't difficult for children. All they have to do is pull on a T-shirt with a plaid hipopotamus appliqué on it and jump into some matching plaid overalls. It's not always as easy for grown-ups to decide what goes with what, which is one reason most men feel safe in a traditional suit. After all, a navy suit, blue shirt and red tie seem almost as predictably meant for each other as Garanimals.

But since fashion rules, particularly those that apply to business attire, have relaxed, the conventional choice isn't always the cool one. "Men's Wardrobe" (Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), the 22nd book in the popular "Chic Simple" series of primers on paring down in order to get it right, has arrived just in time. It tries to clear the murky waters of practical and stylish dressing, presenting solutions for what to wear for every occasion, from fly fishing to job interviews to a best friend's

wedding.

"I think men want to know the rules; then they can break them," says Kim Johnson Gross, a former fashion editor at Esquire and Town & Country who conceived the books with partner Jeff Stone. "Most men don't want to feel out of it."

An eclectic assemblage of quotations are scattered throughout the book, providing some humor amid the tips on wardrobe building. Homer Simpson is the source of a quote that touches on men's desire to fit in. "I can't wear a pink shirt to work," he says. "Everybody wears white shirts. I'm not popular enough to be different."

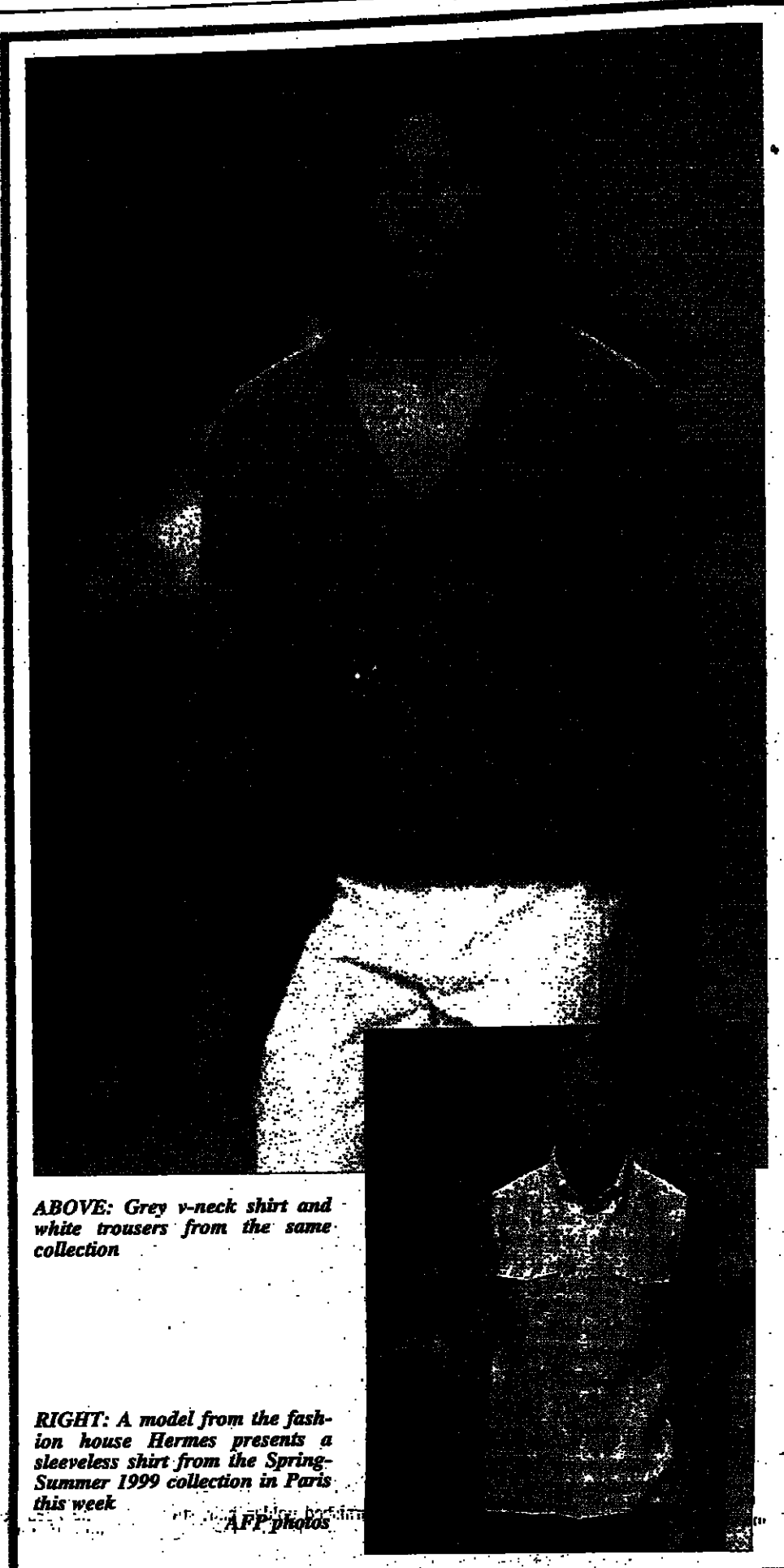
The odd couple of Richard Nixon and Elvis make a point about how one man's sense of what's basic varies from another's. "You dress pretty wild, don't you?" Nixon asked. "Mr. President," Elvis answered, "you got your show to run, and I got mine."

As entertaining as the quotations are, what distinguishes the book

from other male style guides are many colorful photographs of well-dressed "scarecrows." "We don't use models because we don't want the reader's eye to be distracted," Gross explained. "We really want you to look at what we're showing in terms of the mix of elements, or the proportion."

The book's goal is to provide as much information as possible. Even the end papers include checklists and clothing sources. The "Chic Simple" motto is based on an Australian aboriginal proverb. "The more you know, the less you need," Gross explains. "If you simplify your life, de-junk it first, then you can surround yourself with the things you need and enjoy. Our philosophy is that you start with basics, which are beautiful, in and of themselves, and then you build from there."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



ABOVE: Grey v-neck shirt and white trousers from the same collection

RIGHT: A model from the fashion house Hermes presents a sleeveless shirt from the Spring-Summer 1999 collection in Paris this week

AFP photos

'Diana Museum' to open to flood of visitors

By T.R. Reid

LONDON—A nation still infatuated with Princess Diana will immerse itself in a flood of new memories Wednesday when the 'Diana Museum' opens to the public at the lavish country mansion where she grew up.

The late princess' two teenage sons were expected to visit the memorial, and the nearby island grave where their mother rests, before the public opening Wednesday morning. Thereafter, the museum—in a converted stable on the grounds of Althorp, the Spencer family estate—will be open to the public daily for two months.

Visitors reportedly will see memorabilia ranging from a toy car Diana played with as an infant to the letters of regret that poured in from around the world after the Princess of Wales was killed in a Paris automobile accident last August. The public will be allowed only a distant view of the small island on the grounds of the estate where Diana is buried in rural Northamptonshire, north of London.

Althorp officials say that virtually all the 157,000 tickets for this summer's visits have been sold, at a price close to \$16 apiece. That price—like almost everything else surrounding the growing 'Diana industry' here—has been the subject of angry debate as Britons continue to argue over the best way to remember a woman who has been raised to the status of a demigod in the popular culture.

Critics complain that Diana's younger brother, Charles Spencer, 34, is cashing in on his sister's memory to pay the bills on the giant family home. Spencer—who uses the family title, the ninth Earl of Spencer—says that most of the ticket money will go to charities. But he has declined to provide any accounts.

Last weekend, Spencer sponsored a rock concert at Althorp—also described as a memorial to Diana—with tickets priced at \$67.50. About a



third of the earnings from that event went to charity, the earl said.

The British media, with an unquenchable thirst for anything vaguely related to the late princess, also have made much of a reported feud between the Spencers, Diana's family, and the Windsors, the royal family she married into. In recent days, Spencer has been striving to ease these tensions.

In a BBC interview, Spencer seemed to take back the jabs he made at the royal family during Diana's funeral last September. "I wasn't taking swipes at anyone," he said. "I respect their position and everything." And he personally invited Diana's sons, Princes William and Harry, to visit the new memorial before it opens to the public.

All this to-and-fro, however, will probably be lost for the next few weeks amid a new public outpouring of affection and grief for the "People's Princess," who would have celebrated her 37th birthday Wednesday.

The new museum, with samples of Diana's wardrobe and jewelry, videos of her global travels, and life-size pictures of her wedding, will almost certainly trigger a new round of recollections. And there already is extensive debate going on here as to how this Diana-mad country will commemorate the first anniversary of her death on Aug. 31. ■

LA Times-Washington Post

Churches welcome parishioners' pets

Nearer my dog to thee

By David Richards

NEW YORK — St. Clement's Episcopal Church serves a small, poor parish in Hell's Kitchen, just west of Broadway's bright lights. The congregation is a diverse one that includes indigents, immigrants and a lot of struggling performers. On this particular Sunday morning, the attendance totals 39: 35 humans and four dogs.

When it is time for communion, the humans gather in a circle around the altar and join hands. The dogs come forward, too. The Rev. Barbara C. Crafton, who has headed up the church for two years now, makes her way from person to person, offering bread and wine. Each dog gets a blessing.

As the parishioners raise their voices afterward in a hymn of praise, Molly, a 6-year-old cocker spaniel, sits back on her haunches, points her snout heavenward and proceeds to bark. Loudly. Vigorously.

Dare one say joyfully? "I don't know what a human soul is," Crafton observes after the service. "And I certainly wouldn't know what a canine soul is. These things are mysteries. But dogs are living, loving creatures and they give human beings a great deal of pleasure. I don't see any particular reason not to have them in church. They usually don't bark. But they do sing along with the hymns, and I think that's quite nice."

Many churches of various denominations across the country put aside one Sunday a year, often around the birthday of Saint Francis of Assisi, for a special service to bless household pets and other animals. But here at St. Clement's, and at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Manhattan's Upper East Side, dogs are welcome every Sunday.

Holy Trinity, which is Episcopalian as well, asks only that pet owners attend one of the two early-morning services, 8:15 or 9:15. An average of five or six dogs turn up each Sunday with their humans. The rector, the Rev. Herbert Draelos Jr., sometimes brings his poodle,



The Rev. Paul Feuerstein welcomes dogs at early-morning services at Church of the Holy Trinity in Manhattan. Photo by Mitsuo Yasukawa.

Daisy, while the assistant rector, the Rev. Paul Williams, comes with his yellow Labrador, Bear (short for Canterbury), although Bear has a rambunctious nature and, if not restrained, will wander the church in search of canine companionship. Cats, though equally welcome, are less common.

"I love the whole idea," Williams says. "In the Episcopal idea of Christian faith, we like to come to church as a whole person. We bring all of ourselves to God. And for some of us, our pets are part of the definition of who we are. Bringing them to church is a reflection of the idea that creation is good, our bodies are good, this world is good."

In a city that offers day care centers for dogs, masseurs for dogs and even sessions on the psychiatrist's couch for dogs with troubled egos, this sounds like one more post-yuppie crackpot indulgence. The words of the familiar dogology may encourage Christians to "praise

God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below." But do all the creatures necessarily have to be present and accounted for?

"People like to go to church with someone they love," says Judith Gwyn Brown, a children's book illustrator who attends Holy Trinity regularly with her pull dog, Cordelia. "And in New York, people love their dogs, because if you don't, you don't have one for long. So they sit in church and hold their dogs for an hour and get to be close. When you're very busy, as people are here, it's a comforting hour you get to spend together."

Brown started the practice several years ago quite accidentally at Holy Trinity, the kind of faux-Gothic church that looks as if it should be nestled in a glen in the English countryside. It was, Brown recalls, a cold February and she was sick in bed with the flu. "Usually I would take my dog out for a walk before church. But on that

particular Sunday I figured I could make it to church or I could walk the dog, but I couldn't do both. So I decided to take the dog to church with me. I sat in the back, thinking the rector would probably disapprove of the idea, but as he came up the aisle, he saw me and asked us both up to take communion."

"Why not? It was no big deal," Draelos says. "We've gotten a lot of publicity since then—photographers coming around and radio stations calling up. It's gotten distorted from what it was originally. People like to worship with people they know and love. Lots of people in New York live alone and they bring their animals. It's as natural as that."

The practice seems to have started no less casually at St. Clement's. The parish, which rents its quarters during the week to an off-Broadway theater company to help make ends meet, was in desperate need of a volunteer treasurer. Trish

Vivado, who works on Wall Street, was eager to take on the job, but it meant a lot of extra hours and she didn't want to leave Molly, her cocker spaniel, cooped up in the apartment. Could she bring the dog with her? Crafton said yes, and before long, other parishioners began showing up with their dogs, too.

"I suppose it wouldn't work for every parish, but we're very informal here," Vivado says. "There is a moment in the service when everyone greets everyone else. Molly walks around and greets everyone, too. It's made church very approachable for me. Everybody fits in. Everybody being fit in."

The story of dogs and dogma is not always one of happy coexistence. At the Unitarian Universalist church on Central Park West, dogs were routinely welcomed until earlier this year. Then, at the regular church luncheon held after the Sunday service, a dog jumped on the table, disrupting the meal and

traumatizing a parishioner. Reluctantly, the minister instituted a no-dog policy and several parishioners left the congregation.

As for dogs getting something out of the churchgoing experience, well, there a certain skepticism prevails. Wouldn't they really rather be romping in the park? Gnawing on a bone? Sitting on a hill, nose aquiver, decoding the summer breeze?

Probably.

But then consider the case of Brownie, part boxer, part Lab who strayed into the life of the Rev. Richard McCue, a Catholic priest, serves two small North Carolina parishes in the Smoky Mountains. "The church door was open one Sunday," he remembers, "and as I was walking down the aisle, this dog started following me. He was kind of unobtrusive and nobody seemed to mind. So I let him come. Well, it's become routine by now. Brownie sits down alongside the altar and more or less dozes or stretches or scratches his ear. You know, the things that dogs do. Then, when the service is over and the parish stands up, he stands up, too, and follows me back down the aisle. I never trained him or called him. He just started doing this on his own."

McCue says that people in the rural community haven't yet asked to bring their own pets to church. "One's enough," he muses. "It would be kind of pandemonium if everyone brought their pet dogs or cats or gerbils. But Brownie's got a very engaging disposition. People like him. He's the church dog."

If there are any metaphysical implications here, McCue would rather not pronounce on them. Brownie just showed up one day and Brownie stayed on. And that's that.

"I do know that animals were present at the birth of our Lord," McCue volunteers. "I guess I'd like to think he's pleased to have another four-legged parishioner in his midst." ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Memoirs of a Persian prince

Financial Times Syndication

The lunatic and the Oxford English Dictionary

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Éclaboussures

Vive les vacances !

L'été, ce n'est seulement une hausse des températures souvent épouvantable. L'été, c'est aussi du temps social, le retour des Jordaniens qui travaillent à l'étranger, la saison préférée pour les mariages mais surtout c'est le temps de la détente et des loisirs et peut-être le temps de faire le point sur sa vie.

Une minorité de Jordaniens a les moyens de se payer de vraies vacances. Ils partent en Europe ou ailleurs pour deux, trois ou quatre semaines. Mais qu'on le veuille ou non, la plupart restent chez eux pour des raisons essentiellement matérielles. Ceux-là prennent leurs jours de congés par intermittence pour d'abord régler leurs soucis.

Ensuite, une semaine ou deux après la fermeture des écoles, les vacances d'été deviennent un véritable cauchemar pour des centaines de milliers de familles. Les jeunes ne savent pas quoi faire de leurs longues journées. Ils traînent, s'ennuient à la maison, regardent la télévision, se bagarrent, jouent parfois au football dans les rues, où à tout moment une voiture peut les fancher.

Certes l'État fait des efforts mais ils sont loin d'être suffisants. Des centres aérés, des camps d'été, des centres de jeunesse et de loisirs existent à Amman et dans d'autres grandes villes. Mais combien en profitent ? Quelques dizaines de milliers alors que le pays est à plus de 50% âgé de moins de 18 ans. Pourtant la détente et les loisirs constituent des droits à part entière, selon la Convention internationale des droits de l'enfant ratifiée par la Jordanie. Que faire ?

Construire davantage de terrains, de clubs sportifs, organiser plus d'activités culturelles, sociales et sportives contribueraient sans doute à mieux remplir le temps libre. Mais on a surtout besoin d'une véritable politique des loisirs, en particulier de programmes à destination des jeunes. Pourquoi une semaine à Ajloun ou dans le Wadi Rum par exemple est aujourd'hui impossible dans le budget serré d'un ménage ? Ne pourrions-nous pas imaginer des installations d'accueil dont l'utilisation serait libre ? En leur absence, le Jordanien estime que le meilleur moyen de passer ses vacances, c'est de dormir ou de rendre visite aux uns et aux autres pour parler de Pierre, Paul ou Jacques !

Inutile de rappeler que les congés sont importants autant pour le corps que pour l'esprit : faire le vide, aller au rythme indolent d'une vie libre et tranquille et enfin entreprendre seulement ce que l'on a envie de faire : sport, lecture, musique, voyages, distractions, jeux, tourisme etc... La détente est fondamentale pour récupérer et reprendre le travail dans de bonnes dispositions. Vues sous cet angle salutaire, les vacances sont une activité agréable qui ne devrait pas coûter cher. Le gouvernement pourrait y contribuer facilement en encourageant notamment le tourisme intérieur. Combien de sites archéologiques qui méritent d'être visités et qui restent inconnus des Jordaniens ?

Ayons le courage de reconnaître que c'est surtout la volonté de changer et l'imagination qui manquent, beaucoup plus que les fonds. ■

Suleiman Sweiss



Les chars français Leclerc en discussion à Ryad

La France est en train de réfléchir à des schémas industriels et financiers permettant à l'Arabie Saoudite d'acheter des chars Leclerc, malgré la diminution de ses revenus entraînée par la baisse des cours de pétrole. « Nous avons un problème de prix avec le char Leclerc », a reconnu le ministre de la Défense Alain Richard, en expliquant que ce char, construit par le groupe public d'armement GIAT Industries était « plus cher parce que techniquement plus avancé et doit envisager la possibilité d'une « allongation durable de ses ressources ». Dans ce contexte, nous avons engagé des discussions sur des schémas permettant à l'Arabie Saoudite de prendre la décision de principe d'acheter ce matériel, sans doute l'année prochaine, sans surcharger son budget », a indiqué le ministre. Ryad a testé avec succès le Leclerc et envisage d'acquiescer plus de 300 exemplaires du char français qui a déjà été vendu aux Émirats arabes unis. Le ministre n'a pas voulu se prononcer sur les chances de succès de la négociation mais il a estimé que ce contrat, d'une valeur supérieure à 20 milliards de francs (3,3 milliards de dollars), « a pas de caractère vital pour GIAT », en dépit de difficultés financières persistantes du groupe. GIAT a annoncé cette semaine plus de 3500 suppressions d'emploi et la fermeture de plusieurs sites de production. Les syndicats de GIAT ont critiqué à plusieurs reprises ces dernières semaines les ministères de l'Économie et des Finances qui demanderait aux Saoudiens, selon eux, trop de garanties financières sur le contrat, au risque de faire échouer l'affaire.

Processus de paix

«Le minimum des Américains»

Pendant plus de quatre ans, l'ambassadeur de France à Amman, Bernard Bajolet, a été un observateur privilégié du processus de paix et de sa dégradation. Il ne cache pas son admiration pour la patience palestinienne et ses inquiétudes à l'égard des tergiversations israéliennes actuelles. Il faudra de toute façon aller au-delà du redéploiement de 13,1% des territoires occupés, proposé par les États-Unis.

Difficile de porter un jugement sur son propre travail. Bernard Bajolet s'en remet à l'appréciation du roi Hussein qui sera à Paris à la fin de ce mois pour rencontrer le président de la République Jacques Chirac. Malgré tout, à trois mois de son départ de Jordanie, il a accepté de dresser un bilan, avouant même « avoir commis des erreurs » : côté positif, la multiplication des contacts politiques entre la France et la Jordanie et les accords de coopération militaire et culturelle signés en 1995 ; côté négatif, des résultats économiques peu satisfaisants et une part de marché qui n'a pas vraiment décollé. Sur le plan personnel, l'ambassadeur a simplement cette phrase : « Je ne me sentirai jamais étranger en Jordanie ».

Dans cet entretien, il nous livre ses considérations sur un processus de paix moribond. Le Jourdain : Le processus de paix est en panne depuis presque un an et demi maintenant. À qui la faute, selon vous ? Bernard Bajolet : On peut simplement constater que depuis l'élection israélienne et le changement de gouvernement, le processus de paix n'a pas avancé. Il y a bien eu les accords d'Hebron mais depuis, plus rien. Alors les conclusions sont faciles à tirer. Mais le but du jeu n'est pas de dire « voilà ! C'est la faute d'un tel » même si on sait qu'il faut essayer de faire avancer le processus. Peut-on le faire repartir ? Actuellement sur la table des négociations, il y a des propositions américaines (redéploiement très limité de 13,1% des troupes israéliennes des territoires occupés) qui, à notre avis, sont un minimum. Si ce redéploiement ne se pro-

duit pas, on ose à peine imaginer ce qui peut se passer. À ce moment-là, la responsabilité du gouvernement israélien sera évidente.

Le Jourdain : Avez-vous d'autres propositions à mettre sur la table ?

B. B. : Il serait maladroit et contre-productif de mettre d'autres propositions sur la table alors que les propositions américaines font encore l'objet de discussions. Premièrement, ces propositions que nous considérons être un minimum, ne sont déjà pas acceptées par le gouvernement israélien. Deuxièmement, pourrait constituer une diversion par rapport aux propositions américaines serait extrêmement fâcheux car ceci donnerait au gouvernement israélien une nouvelle excuse pour ne pas aller de l'avant. Ce sont les raisons pour lesquelles nous soutenons les propositions américaines tout en sachant qu'elles sont modestes.

Le Jourdain : Pas question pour la France de s'écarter du sillage de la diplomatie américaine ?

B. B. : La France n'est pas dans le sillage de la diplomatie américaine et ne l'a jamais été. Il se trouve que les Américains ont fait des propositions qui nous paraissent raisonnables et endossées desquelles il ne nous semble pas souhaitable d'aller. Nous avons contribué à con-

vaincre les Palestiniens de la paix. Mais elle ne constitue pas la fin du tout, elles sont une étape. Une fois qu'elles seront, nous l'espérons, acceptées par les Israéliens, il faut aller plus loin et engager les négociations sur le statut final.

De toute façon, toute solution qui ne serait pas satisfaisante et équilibrée ne sera pas durable, comme beaucoup d'exemples l'ont montré dans l'Histoire.

Le Jourdain : Le temps n'est-il pas venu de choisir d'autres moyens de pression sur Israël que la voie diplomatique ?

B. B. : Pas encore. La France et l'Égypte ont pris l'initiative d'une proposition (une conférence internationale plusieurs étapes dont la première réunirait pas les Palestiniens et les Israéliens, NDLR). Cette proposition n'est pas une solution de rechange à la proposition américaine. Elle permettrait la remise en selle du processus de paix au cas où les propositions américaines n'aboutiraient pas.

De toute façon, même si les propositions américaines sont retenues par Israël, il faudra sans doute envisager un événement international qui ne soit pas seulement une prise de photo. Dans un monde où les États-Unis ont toutes les difficultés à faire prévaloir leur solution, il faudra donc que les grands pays qui ont des intérêts dans cette

région, qui souhaitent voir le processus de paix aboutir, se portent garants de la bonne exécution de l'accord qui pourrait être réalisé. Car on a vu dans le passé combien d'accords ont été signés sans être appliqués.

Le Jourdain : Est-il envisageable d'adopter des sanctions contre Israël ?

B. B. : Nous n'aimons pas beaucoup le terme de sanctions. La France ne croit pas aux sanctions. Nous le disons à propos de l'Irak. Certes, nous avons voté les résolutions mais nous regrettons un peu d'avoir voté des résolutions sans date limite et d'autre part nous pensons aussi que les sanctions pénalisent les populations innocentes, pas seulement les dirigeants, et n'ont pas les effets souhaités sur les politiques des pays concernés. Ce qui est vrai pour l'Irak est vrai aussi dans d'autres cas. Nous n'excluons pas dans certains cas le recours aux sanctions mais nous ne sommes pas de ceux qui poussent pour les sanctions.

Cela étant, il est clair que l'attitude d'Israël, si elle persiste, ne peut pas se voir de conséquences sur les relations entre Israël et l'Europe en particulier.

Le Jourdain : Conséquences économiques ?

B. B. : Notamment dans le domaine économique. L'Union européenne est le principal partenaire économique d'Israël. Je parle de conséquences, je ne parle pas de sanctions. On ne peut pas à la fois refuser un rôle sérieux de l'Europe dans le processus de paix et faire la sourde oreille à tout ce que dit

l'Europe sans que les relations entre l'Europe et l'État concerné ne souffrent pas, c'est une réaction naturelle. Nous croyons aux vertus du dialogue et nous pensons qu'une grande partie de l'opinion israélienne reste attachée au processus de paix et n'approuve pas certaines attitudes du gouvernement israélien actuel. Notre rôle n'est donc pas de braver cette opinion publique, mais de lui montrer les inconvénients de la politique qui est pratiquée.

Le Jourdain : Le temps de faire redémarrer ce processus de paix, les populations palestiniennes subissent de multiples humiliations quotidiennes.

B. B. : C'est tout à fait vrai. Tant que le processus de paix reste en panne, la population palestinienne souffre. Sans parler des conséquences pour l'ensemble des pays de la région. Les investisseurs étrangers sont moins enthousiastes à investir, dès lors que la paix est fragilisée. Cela dit, c'est l'Union européenne qui de très loin aide les Palestiniens. Et elle en a assez de payer les conséquences économiques d'une politique qu'elle souhaite voir changer.

Le Jourdain : La France bénéficie d'une bonne image parmi les populations arabes. Est-ce qu'alors la France n'est pas tentée de choisir, malgré tout, un camp ?

B. B. : Je n'ai pas dit qu'on ne choisissait pas de camp. Nous choisissons le camp de la justice. Il n'y a pas le noir et le blanc mais cela ne veut pas dire qu'on est au milieu. Vous avez quelquefois d'un côté qui demande l'application de la loi in-

Vous voulez écrire en français ?
Alors n'hésitez pas à collaborer à la rédaction du Jourdain.
Que vous soyez passionné d'économie, de politique, de faits de société ou de culture, vos articles nous intéressent.
Pour tout renseignement, contactez Yannick Lainé au Doustour au 5664153



ternationale et quelqu'un qui la refuse. Nous, on ne va pas se mettre au milieu. On est pour l'application de la loi internationale. Nous nous défendons pas des positions qui peuvent paraître pro-palestiniennes pour des raisons affectives mais parce que nous défendons le droit et la justice.

Le Jourdain : Seulement la justice dont vous parlez est très lente.

B. B. : On peut lui reprocher deux choses. Premièrement, la lenteur, et deuxièmement, plus le temps passe et plus les faits accomplis se multiplient sur le terrain. Il sera donc de plus en plus difficile de trouver une solution équilibrée. Or, actuellement Israël est en position de force pour obtenir à la fois une solution qui soit équilibrée, et qui soit acceptable pour les propres intérêts. C'est pourquoi nous poussons les autorités israéliennes à saisir cette occasion.

Le Jourdain : Qu'on touche à un cheveu d'Israël, le monde entier semble mobilisé.

se, alors qu'il faut de nombreuses victimes du côté palestinien pour obtenir un peu de compassion ? Qu'en pensez-vous ?

B. B. : Je pense que c'est vrai. Les Palestiniens ont gagné la bataille de l'infatigabilité auprès de l'opinion publique mondiale. Au contraire le recours au terrorisme fait pencher l'opinion du côté des victimes de terrorisme.

Le Jourdain : Une autre Intifada pourrait-elle alors faire repartir le processus de paix ?

B. B. : Non. Tant que les Palestiniens utilisent les moyens les moins violents et qu'ils apparaissent comme des victimes, ils gagnent la sympathie de l'opinion internationale. C'est le moment où ils utilisent des moyens violents. C'est la raison pour laquelle j'admire la patience dont les Palestiniens ont fait preuve jusqu'à présent. ■

Propos recueillis par Arne Mango et Yannick Lainé

Hommage

Kanafani : le Che Guevara palestinien

Vingt-six ans après son assassinat, Ghassane Kanafani garde l'image du héros populaire. Une plume très active, au service de la cause palestinienne et des plus faibles.

Au matin du 8 juillet 1972, le quartier Al-Hazimia à Beyrouth se réveille en sursaut. L'explosion d'une voiture vient d'emporter les rêves et les souffrances d'un jeune écrivain palestinien de 36 ans. Une fin que le destin a voulu plus tragique encore que celles imaginées par Ghassane dans ses ouvrages.

Ghassane Kanafani, héros national, héros qui a consacré sa vie à son pays, martyr pour la Palestine. « Ghassane a été grand dans sa mort comme dans ses œuvres. C'était un révolutionnaire qui a renforcé la résistance chez les Palestiniens », évoque Nadia, un jeune professeur dans une école des Nations Unies dans la Vallée du Jourdain, je souhaite aux Palestiniens de suivre les traces de Ghassane, ces traces sont leur chemin pour la libération ». Sa voix résonne encore dans la communauté palestinienne à la manière d'un Che Guevara auquel il a d'ailleurs été souvent comparé. Visage d'enfant et corps malade d'un diabétique, il ne ressemblait pas à un héros de cinéma. Il était au contraire très proche des

gens ordinaires dans leur tendresse et leur tristesse et écrivait pour eux. « Ghassane Kanafani n'a pas seulement abordé le problème palestinien, précise une étudiante en littérature anglaise à l'Université du Yarmouk, il a écrit sur la société en général ».

Une œuvre fournie : nouvelles, romans dont le célèbre *Le reste est la violence* (1966), pièces de théâtre, études littéraires notamment sur la « littérature sioniste », il n'a jamais cessé d'écrire comme s'il savait son temps compté - cette vie est très cruelle pour un homme qui ne vivra pas plus de quarante ans », écrivait-il en 1962. « Il a été le point de départ d'une littérature palestinienne moderne, un des meilleurs écrivains qui ait représenté son pays, un citoyen idéal qui a connu la Palestine avant et après la migration. Je regrette beaucoup sa mort, même si elle a été héroïque », témoigne un autre professeur. On raconte que, réfugié en Syrie après 1948, il était obligé d'exercer des petits métiers

pendant la journée et d'étudier le soir sous l'autorité de son père. L'artiste a ainsi connu toutes les souffrances de son peuple.

Ses écrits politiques ont été largement inspirés par les idées marxistes-léninistes. N'a-t-il pas été un fervent partisan du Front populaire de libération de la Palestine, le mouvement de George Habbache ? À la fin des années 50, il est professeur de lettres au Koweït et poursuit des études par correspondance avec l'Université de Damas. Études qu'il devra interrompre car ses activités politiques lui interdisent d'entrer en Syrie pour passer les examens. En 1961, il s'installe à Beyrouth où il commence une carrière d'homme de presse. Journaliste, il participe à plusieurs publications avant de fonder la sienna en 1969 - *Al-Hadith* (Le Jour). Récemment un livre qui rassemble la plupart des articles écrits pendant cette période libanaise ont été publiés sous le titre *Les articles de Faris Faris*, pseudonyme qu'il utilisait alors.

Mais Ghassane Kanafani, au-delà du discours politique froid, représente aussi une certaine sensibilité : « Il n'a pas écrit d'histoires d'amour mais il est aimé des filles », admet Nuh, ingénieur chimiste. Combattant de la cause palestinienne mais néanmoins artiste : « Il aimait le dessin, surtout les dessins de chevaux, se souvient sa femme, une Danoise rencontrée dans une réunion d'étudiants étrangers pour soutenir les Palestiniens, le cheval pour Ghassane représentait la beauté, le courage, l'intelligence, la liberté, autant de qualités que j'ai trouvées chez lui ». Vingt-six ans après, la victoire d'Anna Kanafani, ce sont les œuvres de son mari traduites en 14 langues étrangères : « Ils n'ont pas réussi à étouffer sa voix ». Il y a Israël depuis longtemps admettent que des membres de ses services secrets ont participé à cet attentat. ■

Shadin Suleiman

La Coupe des Bleus a pris des bleus

Voilà quatre semaines que la France ne parle que ballon. Plongés dans la Coupe du monde, les Français ont découvert l'intensité des matches des Bleus. Mais les belles performances des tricolores n'ont pas réussi à faire oublier les images tragiques laissées par quelques groupes de supporters.



Arrestation musclée d'un supporter trop excité.

Vendredi 3 juillet.

19h05. Les voitures s'arrêtent en catastrophe le long des trottoirs et allument les feux de détresse. Les piétons équipés de balladeurs se figent. Devant les vitrines des cafés se créent des attroupements. Pendant dix secondes, la France a retenu son souffle.

Le temps de voir l'Italien Luigi Di Biagio poser son ballon au point de penalty, de regarder le gardien français Fabien Barthez prendre son envol et d'entendre le bruit du cuir sur la barre transversale. La France était qualifiée pour les demi-finales de la Coupe du monde et elle pouvait enfin souffler. Ou plutôt crier. Pendant cinq minutes, les passants, les badauds, les clients de bars tombent dans les bras des uns des autres.

Dans la cohue, quelques touristes italiens tentent de se dégager. Mais la joie du public français est trop grande. Des bouches de métro sortent une clameur, celle des voyageurs qui viennent d'apprendre avec retard que la France s'est qualifiée en extrême. Sur les quais, seuls quelques voyageurs complètement indifférents at-

tendent un métro qui n'arrive jamais. Lui aussi a dû ralentir dans un tunnel ou rester à la station précédente pour attendre l'issue du match.

Dans les gares, même situation. Certains trains ont beau afficher des retards inhabituels, personne ne se plaint. La plupart des voyageurs sont trop occupés à informer ceux qui descendent tout juste d'un train et qui ne connaissent pas encore le résultat.

D'autres saventont cette victoire qu'ils n'ont pu suivre qu'à la radio. Certains compartiments ressemblaient d'ailleurs à des cafés : les gens se serraient autour de la seule radio présente dans le wagon. Et chaque passager d'ailleurs équipé s'improvisait alors commentateur, répétant fidèlement les propos du journaliste pour tenir informés les passionnés du ballon. Pour les étrangers présents, il leur fallait trouver un traducteur disponible, un peu moins absorbé que les autres par le déroulement de la partie. Dans le pire des cas, ils pouvaient au moins connaître l'évolution du match en écoutant les réactions de joie des supporters français. Autant de scènes de joie et de

communion qui font oublier les dérapages de cette compétition. En mettant l'accent sur la menace terroriste, les autorités françaises avaient un peu fait oublier aux Français que des hooligans pourraient venir gâcher la fête. Quatre jours après le début de la compétition, plusieurs centaines de supporters anglais ont semé la panique dans les rues de Marseille. Le lendemain, ils agressaient des supporters tunisiens qui assistaient au match Angleterre-Tunisie diffusé sur écran géant installé sur la place du Prado.

Après deux jours de heurts violents, les forces de police pouvaient être satisfaites : personne n'avait été tué.

Image ternie

Peu de temps après, c'est l'un des leurs qui était la victime de la violence des hooligans. Frappé par des supporters allemands, un gendarme français a été très grièvement blessé à Lens et se trouve toujours aujourd'hui dans le coma.

Cette agression a bien sûr été condamnée par l'ensemble des pays participants et les gestes de solidarité à l'égard du gendarme blessé se sont multipliés. Mais cet acte de violence, que les organisateurs ont tout fait pour éviter, a terni l'image du plus grand événement mondial organisé en cette fin de deuxième millénaire. D'autant qu'un autre fait divers est venu endeuiller le mondial une quinzaine de jours après. Un supporter anglais qui voyageait en train dans l'Isère le jour du match Angleterre-Argentine a pensé qu'un voyageur assis face à lui se moquait de son équipe car il esquissait de nombreux coups de couteau.

Ce Mondial a aussi entraîné plusieurs drames à l'étranger. De nombreuses personnes ont été blessées au Mexique lorsque la police a violemment dispersé des rassemblements de supporters dans les rues. En Bosnie, une femme a été tuée par des balles tirées par la communauté croate qui fêtait la victoire de son équipe sur l'Allemagne. En Allemagne, des coups de feu ont aussi été échangés entre des supporters allemands déçus et des Croates euphoriques, sans faire de blessés.

Certes exceptionnels, ces débordements sont des plus inquiétants pour l'avenir de telles manifestations sportives. Il est en effet certain que les enjeux financiers deviendront de plus en plus importants et que chaque élimination prendra l'avenir des allures de catastrophe nationale.

S'il peut sembler prématuré de tirer des conclusions de cette XVIII^e édition de la Coupe du monde alors que l'on ne connaît pas encore le nom de son vainqueur, une chose est sûre : les terrains de sports sont amenés de plus en plus à devenir des enceintes où des pays, ayant renoncé à lutter militairement, s'affrontent symboliquement. Dès lors, pourquoi ne pas imaginer un match Palestine-Israël ? Si cette affiche semble aujourd'hui des plus inaccessibles puisqu'elle implique la reconnaissance d'un État palestinien, elle n'est cependant pas complètement utopique. Dans le cadre de l'opération « Banlieues du monde 1998 » à laquelle étaient invités en France 700 jeunes footballeurs pour disputer leur Coupe du monde, une équipe portait les couleurs palestiniennes, celle de Beita Jala. Ces jeunes joueurs ont peut-être ouvert la voie du Mondial à la Palestine. ■

De notre correspondant à Paris, Olivier Bras

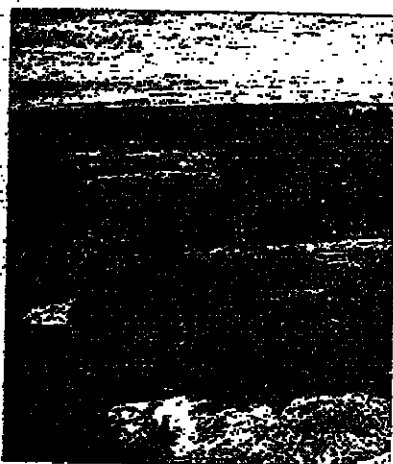
Quand

Le mot de la semaine
«JOURDAIN»

Jordaine, Jourdain... on est dans le thème du Jourdain, qui est aussi le nom de votre journal préféré. L'encyclopédisme, la question n'est pas encore élucidée. Observation : l'écriture de ce mot est complexe. Ce phénomène est courant dans l'écriture de l'arabe. On ne peut pas dire que le Jourdain est un mot difficile à écrire, mais il l'est un peu. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une histoire. Il a été utilisé par les auteurs arabes pour désigner le fleuve qui sépare la Palestine de la Jordanie. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une signification profonde. Il est le symbole de la frontière, de la séparation, de la lutte. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une importance capitale. Il est le cœur de l'histoire de la région. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une valeur sacrée. Il est le lieu de la naissance, de la mort, de la résurrection. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une portée universelle. Il est le lien entre le passé et le présent, entre le monde arabe et le monde occidental. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une résonance profonde. Il est le reflet de l'âme humaine, de ses aspirations, de ses rêves. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une signification éternelle. Il est le symbole de la vie, de la mort, de la résurrection. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une importance capitale. Il est le cœur de l'histoire de la région. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une valeur sacrée. Il est le lieu de la naissance, de la mort, de la résurrection. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une portée universelle. Il est le lien entre le passé et le présent, entre le monde arabe et le monde occidental. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une résonance profonde. Il est le reflet de l'âme humaine, de ses aspirations, de ses rêves. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une signification éternelle. Il est le symbole de la vie, de la mort, de la résurrection.

et l'anglais, vers et de la même eau, anesthésiée dans le nom du Jourdain, est devenue une légende. Le Jourdain serait donc «la rivière qui donne la vie». Des trois suggestions, la dernière est la plus plausible car les égyptologues qui ont écrit les noms de personnages sont souvent égyptiens et ont écrit les noms de personnages en égyptien. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une importance capitale. Il est le cœur de l'histoire de la région. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une valeur sacrée. Il est le lieu de la naissance, de la mort, de la résurrection. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une portée universelle. Il est le lien entre le passé et le présent, entre le monde arabe et le monde occidental. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une résonance profonde. Il est le reflet de l'âme humaine, de ses aspirations, de ses rêves. Le Jourdain est un mot qui a une signification éternelle. Il est le symbole de la vie, de la mort, de la résurrection.

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

C'est la vie
L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

Cycle consacré aux sourires du cinéma français.

La belle équipe, film de 1932 en noir et blanc.

sous-titré en arabe avec Jean Gabin.

Des chômeurs ont gagné une fortune à la loterie

et décident d'ouvrir une guinguette. Leur association

va être troublée par des rivalités amoureuses.

Lundi 13 juillet au Centre culturel français à 18h30 et 20h30. Renseignements

au CCF au 4636445 ou 4637009.

Exposition

De très belles pages ont été

écrites sur le sport. De

Honore de Balzac à Georges

Victor Hugo, l'exposition

«Sport et littérature» et

ses 22 affiches nous en

présentent les principales

réalisations. Du 8 au 30

juillet au CCF.

Théâtre

Pour la mémoire d'un massacre

Quatre à heures à Chatila. Le texte de Jean Genet adapté au théâtre est actuellement en tournée dans la région. Un projet lourd de symboles qui, selon le jeune metteur en scène, n'a pas reçu le soutien espéré.

Jean Genet visite Chatila.

Le peu de temps après le massacre

des populations palestiniennes

en 1982. Il y voit des corps entassés et torturés. Il en

ramènera un récit brut, sans dé-

tails. Une description minuscule

et poétique de l'horreur. Seize ans

après, ce témoignage inscrit dans le

temps, a-t-il encore quelque chose à nous dire ?

Stéphane Bisson, 29 ans, voix rauque

et regard noir, veut croire que oui et a décidé d'en faire

une pièce de théâtre. Après maints

démarches, il finit par trouver les fonds

nécessaires pour partir en tournée

au Proche-Orient. Après Beyrouth

et Amman (la semaine dernière à Darat Al Funun),

Stéphane Bisson et Evelyne Estrin

doivent jouer notamment à Gaza

et plus tard peut-être en France.

Jusqu'à présent, la pièce

«anti-diplomatique» a rencontré

surtout des réticences de la part des

autorités françaises. «J'y suis allé avec

des pincettes, admet par exemple

Denis Toupin, le directeur du Centre

culturel français, qui a proposé la

pièce aux responsables de Darat Al Funun,

c'est le genre de pavé qui fait mal

dans la mare hachée». En tout cas,

Stéphane Bisson ne cache ni son amertume

ni son enthousiasme pour la cause

palestinoise. Le Jourdain : Pour

quoi avoir choisi ce texte de Jean Genet ?

Stéphane Bisson : Je cherchais un

texte où je pourrais retrouver un

motif d'adresse au théâtre. En France,

il y a un déficit d'adresse. Le théâtre

n'est à la hauteur d'aucun propos.

La manière de monter les textes

est très accessible. Cela relève de la

symbolique ou de la mythologie.

Les metteurs en scène ont de moins

en moins le souci de ce que les gens

attendent.

Le Jourdain : Avez-vous rencontré

des difficultés pour réaliser cette pièce ?

S. B. : En France, on me traite

d'antisémite ou bien les gens

sont lâches. Ici, au Proche-Orient,

Laurent Gallissot, responsable

du réseau des centres culturels français

en Israël et en Cisjordanie, m'a reçu dix minutes

et m'a dit : «Jean Genet, faut passer à autre chose», le

théâtre palestinien, «il aura jamais

et c'est mauvais de travailler avec l'Autorité

palestinienne qui a une culture dictatorial

». Or le type est censé coopérer avec eux. Si on est là,

c'est grâce à la courtoisie d'Agnes B.

qui nous a donné 60.000 francs

et puis, c'est vrai, l'Autorité Palestinienne

est derrière ce projet. Pour nous, c'était

le seul moyen d'arriver à nos fins.

Le Jourdain : Lorsque vous étiez

à Chatila, vous vous êtes rendus à

Beit-Léah. Comment s'est passé cette

rencontre ? S. B. : Tout est allé très vite.

Des familles de Chatila sont venues

voir la représentation à Beyrouth.

Ils ne savaient pas bien ce qu'était le

théâtre. Mais ils ont ressenti énormément

de choses sans comprendre un mot.

Ensuite, ils nous ont invités chez eux.

Ils nous ont montré des vidéos de

Chatila. On a parlé. Ils nous ont dit :

«Nous ne voulons pas de médicaments,

de nourriture, mais il faut que vous

parliez de nous en France». Chatila, c'est

la merde, ça pue, il y a des cafards

parout. C'est un ghetto. Ils ne construisent

rien. Ils ne peuvent pas nous enlever

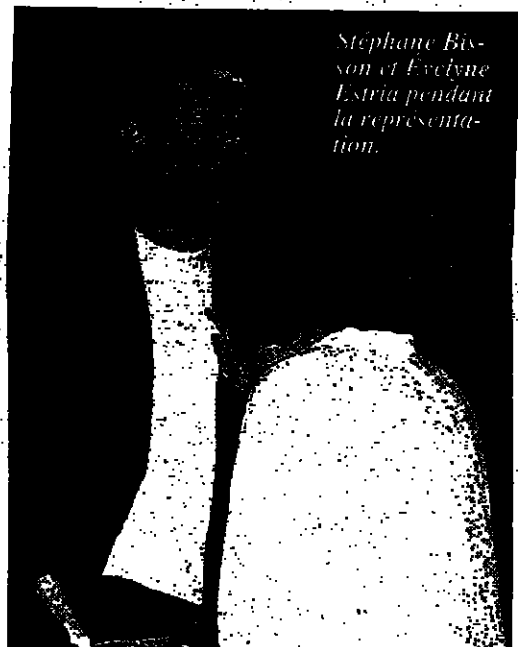
mais on ne trouve rien. C'est un enfer

lumineux comme dit Genet. Ce sont des

gens qui ont eu leurs fils décapités

mais qui sont encore debout. ■

Propos recueillis par Yannick Lainé



Stéphane Bisson et Evelyne Estrin pendant la représentation.

Portrait

Quand la beauté naît de rien

À Djebel Lweibdeh, dans le secret de son atelier, Mohammed Itani est le créateur génial de tout le mobilier de sa maison. Un univers complet à partir de trois fois rien : des bois de récupération.

S'il existe

un exemple de

l'ignition industrielle et féconde,

c'est bien chez Mohammed Itani.

Depuis quatre ans, vous pouvez

le voir sortir tous les après-midi

de sa maison, silhouette costarde

qu'une bonhomie naturelle rend

aussitôt sympathique. D'un pas

tranquille, il descend quelques

marches d'escalier et pénètre dans

un appartement spacieux situé en

dessous du sien. Il traverse couloir et

larges pièces dénuées de meubles,

ne prête garde à la vue superbe

déployée au-dessus, pour disparaître

dans une petite cuisine borgne,

réduit ébriqué et encombré. C'est

l'univers de l'artiste. Son atelier. Au

sol, une multitude de débris de

bois de toutes tailles. Pas le moindre esquille.

Il faut marcher dessus. Sur l'ébali,

quelques croquis, une scie, une

petite ponceuse électrique, une

perceuse. Car Mohammed Itani,

ingénieur-architecte, du fond de

l'âme jusqu'au bout des doigts,

n'importe que de bois, fragment de

cageots à légumes ou d'emballages

pour réfrigérateur, est pour lui

matériau à polir, amincir, entailler,

figurer... Et voilà que surgissent

de ses mains, massifs et gais, des

imposants comme la stature de leur

créateur, tables, chaises, buffets,

lampadaires, vaisseliers, coffres,

paravents, penderies. Meubles et

objets de toutes dimensions,

pondérés dans leurs formes et

mettent alors à vivre dans des

paysages de la Jordanie ou du

Liban, pays d'où sa famille est

originaire, ou des paysages

imaginés : une scène observée

sur le marché, une photo de

journal, un souvenir mais aussi

une scène de mythologie, une

peinture étrusque sont traduits

dans le bois sombre. Mais la

nature reste le thème primordial,

souvent uni à des éléments

architecturaux, parmi lesquels

la porte arquée. Image de

l'habiller par excellence. Le cas

échéant, le facteur de meubles

se plait à incorporer des

tableaux dans le mobilier, réalisant

des ensembles harmonieux,

sans rupture entre la géométrie

et l'image. Ainsi, un vaisselier

prête-t-il son fond à une vue

du vieux port de Beyrouth, un

paravent intègre-t-il dans ses

moulures une bâtisse d'Amman

ou une mosquée.

Un seul regret

Mohammed Itani n'a jamais

appris la menuiserie. L'idée lui

est venue en réparant les

meubles endommagés de la

maison, en bricolant étagères et

autres accessoires pour ses

enfants. «Très jeune, j'avais le

sentiment persistant que je

pouvais faire quelque chose de

mes mains, explique-t-il. J'ai

découvert il y a quelques années

que c'était le bois».

Le mobilier chaleureux qui

emplit aujourd'hui sa demeure

donne un caractère rustique à

cette maison d'Amman au sein

d'une contrée où bien souvent

la pierre supplante le bois. Malgré

la ressemblance avec l'ameublement

des vieilles maisons d'Europe,

le travail de Mohammed Itani

ne se résume à une réclamation

d'ancienne tradition. Dans sa

singularité, son ouvrage garde

l'empreinte d'un travail réfléchi

et recherché, même lorsque le

bois s'organise en compositions

géométriques. La simplicité

s'élève au rang de l'art. Dans le

démarche de l'endroit où sont

réalisées ses œuvres, l'artiste,

pour décrire son travail, s'ex-

clame : «C'est la beauté née de

rien».

D'une touchante humilité, il

ne lève que peu à peu le voile

de son univers. D'ailleurs, le

sujet de ses paroles ne sur-

fit pas à rendre l'ouvrage de

sa passion et la profondeur de

sa personnalité. «La principale

qualité requise est l'inspiration

même s'il s'agit de géométrie

pure», dit-il, on peut se triturer

longtemps l'esprit pour savoir

comment orienter une latte».

Parfois, raconte son épouse

plus loquace que lui, il me revient

fâché, bourru. Il n'a pas

dormi. Il reste fermé et s'en va

dormir. Si, au contraire, il est



«On peut se triturer longtemps l'esprit pour savoir comment orienter une latte», Mohammed Itani avec quelques-unes de ses réalisations.

comprend et elle accepte. Je

veux lui rendre hommage pour

cela. Derrière chaque homme,

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

Les Jordaniens derrière leur écran
À Madaba, Ahmad qui rit,
Ahmad qui pleure

Cinq heures

moins le quart sur la

route de Jafar, destination Madaba.

Une caravane de voitures de nos jours

retarde quelques minutes. Une tradition

insupportable surtout quand vous êtes

pressés. Nous arrivons enfin à Madaba

devant le temple de Baalshamin et sa

colline, carte-musée de Palestine. Selon

les habitants de Madaba, son nom vient

de la reine grecque Aydia qui gouvernait

les destinées de la ville. Il y a bien longtemps.

Au-delà des considérations historiques,

c'est le seul café sympa que l'on connaisse

à Madaba.

Avant d'entrer, on interroge Youssef,

le serveur égyptien, beau comme un pharaon,

timide comme un enfant : «Il y aura du

monde aujourd'hui pour France-Italie ?».

«Je n'en sais rien», répond-il le regard

fuyant, chaque jour est différent. Pas

très rassurant mais on entre quand même

qu'on n'a pas le choix.

A l'intérieur du chaleureux petit café,

une vingtaine de jeunes, 16-17 ans, sont

assis confortablement, comme chez eux,

près de la porte d'entrée. On marche plus

lentement, on se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

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sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

sans parler. On se regarde, on s'observe

Lentement, notre espace vital se réduit.

Les jeunes se joignent à nous pour nous

expliquer pourquoi ils sont tellement

telle équipe. A la mi-temps, l'un d'eux

se lève pour boire le volume des têtes

et branche un mégaphone en criant : «Écoutez,

écoutez, cette chanson c'est vraiment

général». Certains demandent à Youssef des

surgelés, d'autres allument des cigarettes

ou se servent eux-mêmes un coca ou un

verre d'eau. Ce n'est pas un café mais un

vrai foyer pour jeunes. Dans cette cour

Star of the week: Michael Owen

England's future brightens under Owen



By Abdul Hamid Addasi
Special to the star

MICHAEL OWEN proved his talent when he scored a terrific goal against Argentina in the 2nd round (the goal was similar to that scored by the Maradona against England in Mexico 86). He played well throughout the game, and scored a penalty, but it was not enough for England (playing with only ten players after the expulsion of Beckham), who failed to qualify for the quarter finals.

Hodde, the England coach, didn't play Owen in England's first match against Tunisia, but after intense media pressure, Owen came on as a substitute during the second match against Romania, scoring England's only goal. He then played the full 90 minutes

against Colombia. With the media pressure rising, Hodde banned the 18-year-old Liverpool striker from all press conferences.

All of the England coaching staff are excited about Owen's future, and they see him as the key to regaining England's former glory. Hodde's assistant coach John Gorman and Arsenal captain Tony Adams were wheeled out to talk about England's most exciting player. "He was always a major part in our plans; very much part of the team," Gorman said. "It was just about the timing. People may have been calling for him but he was always going to come on in that match," he said of the Romania game when Owen came on as a substitute and scored a short-lived equalizer.

"When somebody comes on with that enthusiasm and pace

it's a natural reaction to say 'Put him on all the time...make him captain...let's have him for President' and I can understand it," said Adams. "I personally feel that if players are good enough it doesn't matter what age they are. I think he's good enough, he's a super player."

The Arsenal skipper added, Gorman conceded: "He improved throughout the season and whenever he's been given an opportunity he has taken it." "We're all excited and rightly so but we don't want to put too much pressure on him, although I'm sure he's at the start of a fantastic career," Adams agreed. "His enthusiasm is great, which it should be. His qualities are very obvious. He's quick and mobile, enthusiastic and young, with pretty good movement. Glenn (Hodde) handled him the way he wanted to. He felt it wasn't right for him to start the first two games. You can't knock that," Adams continued.

Owen, was the youngest player in the England squad this month, but despite his age he added a touch of class to the tournament. He reminded us of some young players who played in past World Cups: Pele was just 17 in Sweden 58, as was the present Brazilian striker Ronaldo in the World Cup of 1994.

cer loonies. Their cheers can be crude, referring to their opponents' parentage and virility. They hate to lose.

And the Dutch, driven to a frenzy as their team outclassed the favorite, matched them yell for yell. When the game ended, both sides stood firm, trading cheers for half an hour across an empty playing field. Outside, Argentinians drifted away, leaving the Dutch to party. One reveler, Stephan Eltink, wore orange pants, a flag and a half-pound of paint. "I'm a paramedic in normal life," he explained.

Holland has its hooligans as well, but few were around. Fans like Hannie Opheij were far more common. She lives in a small village and takes care of old people. "I love soccer," she pronounced, ablaze in orange, with a litre of beer in hand and a wide grin. "It's not only the game, but everything about it." She expects Brazil to beat Holland, but that does not bother her. "Win or lose, it's a party," she said, echoing a sentiment heard in different languages at nearly every game.

"That's because soccer is the most important thing in the world," said Fred Martens, a Dutch technology consultant who wore red and blue paint on his cheeks and an orange cape. "People say it's a game. Hah. It's life."

No, corrected Patrick Snijders, a co-worker in the same get-up, matching his laugh. "It's war." It can be, but it wasn't on Saturday. The same riot troops who fought running battles with the English near the Octopus took off their helmets to put on silly orange stocking caps and pose with Dutch fans. "We're the craziest soccer fans in the world," Martens said.

"Maybe it's because things aren't so exciting in Holland, but this gives us a chance to party."

Perhaps. Stereotypes of the sober, softly-spoken Dutch fly out the window as hordes of them bellow in unison, guzzle beer in the streets and swing giant inflatable hammers to the amusement of uninvolved bystanders.

But it would take a World Cup of fans, rather than players, to determine who are the craziest. Brazilians might win. Or maybe the English, the Italians, the Scots, the Nigerians, the Jamaicans. Or, of course, the Argentinians. Saturday's game was fought as hard in the stands as on the field.

The Dutch scored first, and a thunderous roar rose under a blur of orange flags. Then Argentina kicked in a goal. The noise was the same but the color was blue.

The Argentinians, who have won two World Cups and sensed a third, are normally the most fervent of soc-



Game of the week: Croatia vs Germany

Croatia halts Germany's World Cup campaign

LYON, FRANCE—World Cup rookie Croatia produced one of the biggest upsets in soccer history Saturday when it defeated three-time champion Germany 3-0 to reach the semi-finals.

Robert Jarni scored from a 25-yard shot at the end of the first half, eight minutes after German defender Christian Woerns was sent off for hauling down Croatian striker Davor Suker. Goran Vlaovic added a second goal with a 20-yard shot with about 10 minutes left and Suker scored the third goal five minutes later.

Croatia, which became a nation seven years ago after breaking away from Yugoslavia, is the first team since Portugal (in 1966) to advance to the semifinals in its first World Cup. The Croats met France yesterday night at the Stade de France just outside Paris for the right to play in the final. It was the second straight quarter-final defeat for the Germans, who were knocked out of the '94 Cup by Bulgaria.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, regarded as a lucky fan because he hasn't seen the German team lose since 1986, was in the crowd at the Stade de Gerland.

The game featured rough play and fouls throughout. Croatia's Igor Simic and Dario Simic and Germany's Jorg Heinrich all were given the yellow-card warning in a seven-minute period early in the game for needless tackles that sent opponents sprawling. The Germans nearly struck first when Dietmar Hamann's 8-yard header grazed the crossbar after a free-kick from Thomas Haessler.

Croatian goalkeeper Drazen Ladic then made an impressive double save in the 31st minute when Oliver Bierhoff jumped to head another crossing pass.



Ladic saved the header at the foot of the post and, with Jurgen Klinsmann swooping in to try to score on the rebound, the keeper reacted quickly to kick the ball to safety.

Once Woerns was ejected and the Germans were forced to play a man down, their attacks lost their punch and the Croats were able to take advantage. It looked even worse for the short-handed Germans when the Croats went ahead. Jarni collected a pass from Mario Stanic and drove a low left-footed shot past goalkeeper Andreas Koepke for the first score. At that point, the Germans needed another amazing comeback, like they did against Yugoslavia, when they came back from 2-0 down to force a 2-2 tie, and when they beat the Mexicans 2-

1 after trailing with 15 minutes to go. They almost came back against Croatia just five minutes into the second half when a shot from Bierhoff, a 6-yard volley, was blocked by Ladic on his line. With about 12 minutes left, German midfielder Michael Tarnat fired a low 25-yard shot from a free kick that was deflected and hit the outside of the post. A minute later it was all over for the Germans. With the German defense retreating, Vlaovic moved into a shooting position on the edge of the area and fired a low drive that flew into Koepke's inside post. With the Germans committed to attack, they left huge gaps at the back and Suker easily got round a defender with five minutes to go and fired a low, close range shot under Koepke.

Mondial Scoreboard

2nd round:
Italy vs Norway 1-0
Brazil vs Chile 4-1
France vs Paraguay 1-0 (golden goal)
Denmark vs Nigeria 4-1
Germany vs Mexico 2-1
Holland vs Yugoslavia 2-1
Croatia vs Romania 1-0
Argentina vs England 4-3 (penalties) (2-2 on played time)
Quarter finals:
Brazil vs Denmark 3-2
France vs Italy 4-3 (penalties) (0-0 on played time)
Holland vs Argentina 2-1

Croatia vs Germany 3-0
Semi Finals:
Holland vs Brazil
France vs Croatia



Vieri, Batistuta, Owen among 61 finalists

PARIS—Christian Vieri of Italy and Gabriel Batistuta of Argentina, both tied for the tournament leading scorer with five goals apiece, are among 61 finalists for the World Cup all-star team announced Friday.

Eighteen-year-old Michael Owen of England, who had only three international appearances coming into the tournament, was among the 17 strikers selected, along with teammates Alan Shearer and Paul Ince. Ince was one of 24 midfielders chosen, along with five wing defenders, 10 sweeper-central defenders, and five goalkeepers.

No members of the US team, eliminated in the first round and last among the 32 teams, were among the all-star finalists. Nineteen teams were represented on the list, with

France leading the way with eight players. Four-time winners and defending champions Brazil and the Netherlands each had six, and Argentina followed with five. Denmark, Croatia and England each had four, while Italy, Romania, Paraguay, Germany, Spain, Nigeria, Norway and Mexico had two each, while Yugoslavia, Japan and Morocco had one apiece.

The finalists, selected by FIFA's technical study group, will be reduced to 16 following the semifinals, and the team will be announced July 10, two days before the final.

MasterCard, the sponsor, will donate \$50,000 to FIFA's official charity, SOS Children's Villages, on behalf of the players selected.

Fan of the week



'Craziest fans in world' paint town orange

MARSEILLE, France—The color du jour at the Octopus Bar is bright Dutch orange. In fact, victory-crazed Holland fans painted the whole town orange, a happy change for a tough port city recovering from too much English red.

Something about soccer turns perfectly normal people into temporary lunatics, and they love it. Pre-game madness is crazy enough, but the Dutch reached new heights after beating Argentina 2-1 to earn a crack at Brazil in the World Cup semifinals.

"That's because soccer is the most important thing in the world," said Fred Martens, a Dutch technology consultant who wore red and blue paint on his cheeks and an orange cape. "People say it's a game. Hah. It's life."

No, corrected Patrick Snijders, a co-worker in the same get-up, matching his laugh. "It's war." It can be, but it wasn't on Saturday. The same riot troops who fought running battles with the English near the Octopus took off their helmets to put on silly orange stocking caps and pose with Dutch fans. "We're the craziest soccer fans in the world," Martens said.

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The expulsion of Beckham

England star cast as the villain

SAINT-ETIENNE, FRANCE—England's David Beckham was cast as a villain after 10-man England lost 4-3 in a penalty shoot-out to Argentina.

The 23-year-old Manchester United star, as famous for going out with one of the Spice Girls as he is for his football, changed the whole game when he was sent off in the second half. It happened two minutes into the second half when Argentina skipper Diego Simeone clattered into Beckham from behind and left him sprawling face down on the grass. As Simeone walked back past him, Beckham lifted his foot to kick him right in front of the Danish referee Kim Nielsen, who had no

option but to pull out his red card.

England coach Glenn Hodde was the first to admit it has cost his side the match. "I don't deny that the sending off cost us dearly. It was a mistake but these things happen in football. I am not denying it cost us the game," said a bitterly disappointed Hodde.

The English Press Association were even more brutal. Their chief sports reporter wrote: "David Beckham was simply a disgrace. He should hang his head in shame this morning after letting England down in the biggest game of his life. He deserves to have the Three Lions stripped from his shirt for an act of crass stupidity when he got himself sent off for kicking out at Argentina's captain Diego Simeone. So let's not blame the courageous David Batty for missing the penalty that cost England a place in the quarter-finals. Let's instead blame Beckham's peevish and sly kick, foolishly enacted under the nose of referee Kim Milton-Nielsen."

Only days earlier Beckham was being hailed the hero. Manchester United coach Alex Ferguson made a bitter attack on Hodde when he failed to pick him for England's first group match. He was supported by Manchester United director Sir Bobby Charlton.

Hodde defended his decision, claiming that Beckham was not focused, insisting his mind was more on his showbiz romance with the pop singer than with football. When the England coach finally put the multi-million pound striker in the line-up against Colombia, the English press crowed that people power had won the day. Hodde hit back saying that it was he that had got the superstar back on track and that people power had nothing to do with it. After Tuesday night's nightmare, both the public and Hodde appear to be hanging Beckham out to dry on his own.



University of Jordan worthy champions

By Star Staff Writer

THE 5TH Woman's Indoor Football Tournament was held at the University of Jordan last week, in association with the Awraq newspaper, and under the patronage of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince Abdullah (President of the Jordanian Football Association) and Princess Rania.

Seven teams participated in the competition that took place over a three-day period between 29 June to 1 July. They included the University of Jordan, the Orthodox Club, the Amman National Girls School, British Embassy, Amman Private University, Muta University and Al Muqabaleen.

The preliminary rounds held over the first two days were very competitive, with all the teams taking time to test each other out. Five-a-side indoor football is a faster game than the eleven-a-side game, so all the players had to adjust and pace themselves during each of the 30 minute games. The rules of the game are different as well, with players allowed to kick or roll the ball in from the sideline, when



taking a throw-in. By the final day of the competition, only four teams were left, and a place in the

final awaited the two semi-final winners. In the first semi-final, the Orthodox Club came out winners against the Amman

National Girls School (3-1), whilst in the second match the British Embassy were outclassed, losing 7-1 to the University of Jordan. This set up a University of Jordan versus the Orthodox Club final, and after a hard fought match, the team from the University of Jordan came out eventual winners (4-0).

After the final match, a presentation was given by the General Secretary of the Ministry of Youth, Assam Aridah. The following presentations were made:

Winners Trophy (The University of Jordan)
Runners-up Trophy (The Orthodox Club)
Fair Play Trophy (The British Embassy)
Top Goalscorer Award (Zeina Arali (12 Goals) - Amman NGS)
Best Goalkeeper Award (Maha Awad - U of Jordan)
Best Player Award (Haya Al Najjar - U of Jordan)
(Nancy Abu Salah - U of Jordan)
(Stephanie Al Nabr - Amman NGS)

The fire beneath American Indian filmmaker Sherman Alexie's 'Smoke Signals'

By Rita Kempley

LEST HIS 'Smoke Signals' be lost on us, too, first-time filmmaker Sherman Alexie dropped by to fan the flames for the first full-length feature written, directed and produced by American Indians.

Based on the 31-year-old's collection of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist Fight in Heaven*, the bittersweet buddy movie, written and directed by Alexie, was the darling of this year's Sundance Film Festival and has since won two big thumbs up among other critical plaudits.

Alexie, his eyes owl-like behind thick glasses and his ponytail swinging to his waist, has just heard the thumbs report. At long last, the Indians have won one. Make that two big ones.

Also the author of two novels and six volumes of poetry, Alexie loved books and movies about Indians as a boy. It didn't matter how unsympathetically they were portrayed. Heck, he sometimes even rooted for John Wayne.

"You were so hungry for some sort of validation of your existence in the national consciousness that any images were acceptable, as long as they were brown," he explains. "So you watch cowboy movies because you at least see Indians. You still root for them and hope that this will be the movie where they finally win."

As he recently wrote in the *Los Angeles Times*, that Hollywood Indians were invariably portrayed by white actors, accompanied by ominous music and dead-serious delivery. In 'Smoke Signals,' the actors, with few exceptions, are Indian, the music is eclectic and the characters demonstrate a sly, self-deprecating wit.

His own sense of humor has been described as wry or irreverent, though on this occasion it's acid enough to dissolve a cast-iron skillet.

"Movies have never allowed us to be fully functioning members of the dominant culture and society. This

movie shows that we are just as influenced by our own particular tribe of cultures as we are pop cultures. That's how we live our lives. That's who we are."

On the other hand, Alexie says, "Nothing good comes out of assimilation. No good art comes out of assimilation. All great art is very specifically tribal. Not just the Indian tribes. All the tribes. I think European Americans would do themselves a great favor by reattaching themselves to their culture—there's just so much beauty there's missing."

Though members of several tribes participated in the making of 'Smoke Signals,' the protagonists, like Alexie, are Coeur d'Alene Indians. Asked if the tribal mix distorted the portrait of his people in any way, Alexie snaps, "I'm not a spokesperson for anybody. White filmmakers don't get asked those kind of questions. Nobody ever assumes that Martin Scorsese's latest film is about all Italians. And nobody assumes that Woody Allen's film is all about Jewish people."

Alexie identifies strongly with the film's bantering protagonists: Victor Joseph (Adam Beach), a hunky cynic, and Thomas Builds-the-Fire (Evan Adams), a nerdy character. He shares Victor's quick temper and impulsive nature, and like Thomas, he's a compulsive storyteller with an offbeat sense of humor.

Like both young men, Alexie is the son of an alcoholic. And he's a recovering alcoholic himself. "I started at 18, quit at 23 and have been sober for eight years. It was five years in all, but they were like dog years. I tried to put about 35 years of drinking into that period," he recalls. "I would go out and buy a case of beer—the cheapest beer I could get—\$5 a case. Rent three or four movies, put them in my VCR at college and just start drinking. Pass out. Wake up and then try to remember what I'd seen, rewind the tape and start over again."

It began when he transferred to Washington State

University because he could no longer afford the tuition at Gonzaga, a private Jesuit college. "I didn't fit in. I didn't belong," says Alexie, who was also disillusioned. "They tell minority kids and poor kids if you get to college everything is going to be okay. Then you get there and you realize college is a microcosm of society. All the rich white kids have all the power and all the poor brown kids have none."

"And the teachers are mostly terrible, the books are old and useless, and they teach you the same lies that every high school in the country teaches," he continues. "Iconoclastic thought can get you a C-plus on an essay test. Outright agreement will get you an A-minus. So I hated it, but I knew I needed the degree. I played the game, got drunk and I graduated summa cum laude."

Alexie was 21 when he began writing. "I was going to be a pediatrician. I was born with fluid pressure on the brain. I had brain surgery when I was six months old and was very sickly until I was about seven. Like most sick kids I really got obsessed with medicine and doctors, but I couldn't hack the human anatomy class. I kept fainting. Not good bedside manner."

After his first book, *The Business of Fancydancing*, was published in 1992, agents and editors started calling, and he's been gathering citations ever since.

He's made more than his share of enemies, including some Indians who consider his stories demeaning. D.C. bookworms were steamed when he didn't show up for a January reading at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Given the choice between Sundance and the prestigious PEN/Faulkner series, Alexie chose the film festival. The group was somewhat mollified when he sent a check for \$1,000.

"I make lots of money," Alexie says.

He still drives a 1988 Dodge Shadow. "My material possessions are books and CDs. And I buy some nice

clothes once in a while. I give a lot of money away. I take care of my family. Money is the root of all evil. It's a cliché but it's a true cliché. The second anything becomes about money, it becomes evil and manipulative and that's when you become somebody entirely different."

No meetings with Hollywood's 'evil white bastards' for Alexie. "In the right light I can't tell the difference between an Armani suit and a cowboy uniform," he says with a guffaw. "I've already turned down dozens of offers from the evil white bastards."

Like what? "I can't talk about it. I'll get sued. The evil white bastards are litigious."

he observes.

However, if 'Smoke Signals' is a hit at the box office, the EWBs might be more willing to back Indian filmmakers and actors in the way Spike Lee's successes paved the way for African American filmmakers (For the record, Scott Rosenfelt, who produced along with Alexie, is white, but not an evil bastard in Alexie's opinion).

Rosenfelt, who is also one of the producers of Alexie's next film, 'Indian Killer,' actually suggested the writer add an Indian part to the screenplay).

Alexie readily admits he's a bigot. "Everybody's racist. When somebody says, 'I

never notice a person's race," he sputters, "they're lying. Hell, we make assumptions based on the clothes people wear, so of course we're going to make assumptions based on their skin color. It's what we do with that information that counts."

"The farther East I get, I could be lots of things: Middle Eastern, Chinese, Chicano, Puerto Rican. I could walk through Washington, D.C., and be invisible. I can walk through New York and be invisible," he says.

But that's not the same as walking through Spokane, Washington. That's not the same as walking through Des Moines, Iowa, not the same as



walking through Norman, Oklahoma. You always know your place in society, but not here.

"In the West, people know exactly what I am the second they see me. I've had the hell kicked out of me for being Indian. I've been stopped by cops for being Indian," continues Alexie, who says residents of the East Coast are

sheltered because the population is diverse in race, color, creed. Fewer white people.

"Yeah, because the more white people there are, the more racist a place gets."

"I'm bored," he announces. "The interview is over." Indians 1, EWBs 0. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

'Smoke signals' Message comes through clear from the heart

By Stephen Hunter

'SMOKE SIGNALS' has already established an identity as the first Indian film—that is, the first film written by, performed and directed by American Indians. That makes it novel. That doesn't make it good.

What makes it good is that the coded communications in 'Smoke Signals' don't come from the tribal council, the wickiups, the medicine lodges or even the reservation. They come from the heart. And that's the surprise of the movie, beyond even the humor and humanity of its inside look at contemporary American Indian culture. It's really the oldest and most primal story forms, the one about the old man and the boy.

Both old man and boy are Coeur d'Alene, whose lives are bounded by the bleak reservation fences in northern Idaho. There's not much going on there—no mining, no big game, no reservation radio station traffic cop—looming by the side of a barren highway and calling in, "Nope, no traffic yet"—and life on what amounts to a federal dole has worked out predictably: a vicious cycle of hopelessness, alcoholism and abuse.

So it is with Victor Joseph and his father, Arnold, and the usual things between them: love and fear and hatred and violence and the

final estrangement. Yet the movie is largely a comedy.

Its two heroes, Victor (Adam Beach) and his pal, punching bag and traveling companion Thomas Builds-the-Fire (Evan Adams), are a superb duo; the two young actors have reflexive comic timing between them as they leave the reservation on a melancholy errand, a bus trip to Phoenix to retrieve the ashes of Arnold Joseph, who abandoned his wife and son 10 years earlier.

Like travelers in movies and books (but hardly ever in real life), they meet fascinating people, while the more orthodox and stoic Victor tries to teach the irrepressible, yellow-but-optimistic Thomas how to be an Indian. Though Coeur d'Alene were fishermen, he tries to counsel the younger man on how to achieve that stoic, fierce face on the nickel, that look that seems the appropriate mask of a horseback buffalo slayer or Seventh Cavalry vanquisher. Poor Thomas: his brilliant, firecracker mind keeps fixating on ideas, images and stories. He can't stop talking long enough to play the Big Bad Indian game, and with his buckteeth and the square glasses he wears, he looks more as if he'd hug you than scalp you.

The folks they meet aren't that

surprising, nor is the lesson they take from the meetings, which is that there's still a lot of racism in this country. The writer, novelist Sherman Alexie (adapting a couple of his short stories), and the director, Cheyenne-Arapaho Chris Eyre, have some fun reversing cliché expectations: When two obnoxious men steal their seats, the two youths don't fight them but retire to the back of the bus, where they wage psychological warfare by singing a rude anthem devoted to John Wayne's teeth.

But their journey is not merely geographic, from mountains to desert, or comic, from one stereotype to its opposite. It's also interior, as each young man recalls his complex relationship with Arnold, who was not merely Victor's father but the man who saved Thomas from the terrifying fire that killed his parents. So the movie drifts back and forth through the past, recalling the tortured path of the Joseph family and its self-destruction.

In an earlier century, Arnold (Gary Farmer), an immense and powerful man, would have directed the best light cavalry troops in the world, or at least been the mightiest salmon fisherman of the Spokane River. But in this century, he's 250 pounds of warrior machismo and strength

with nowhere to go, nothing to do, so he's turned furiously inward, quelling his aggressions with beer, which he consumes by the gallon. Farmer is one of those deceptively simple actors. He seems almost comical at first, a huge bear of a man with a little singsong voice, the totem of a thousand studio pics—the drunken Injun. How, Big Chief?

This is how: rage, pain, fury, an almost heroic refusal to be what people expect. Farmer shows the strength behind Arnold's bulk but also the pain. His is the love of others and hatred of the self that too often can only express itself in violence, and Arnold can be a bully. But Farmer never lets him be just a bully, a tyrant chieftain of the absolute. He also shows us a man wracked by self-hatred, guilt and yet desperately full of love. It's a great performance (the may be familiar to some viewers from 'Dead Man,' the Jim Jarmusch film in which he played Nobody opposite Johnny Depp).

Despite the ethnic specificity of the setting, what these smoke signals are really saying is that the awkwardness between fathers and sons is universal. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

The Amish way of life

By Clare Gascoigne

FARMING HAS changed a lot in the 60 years since Leroy Esh was a boy. It is so specialized now; if you are not into hogs or poultry in a big way, forget it. His son now milks about 60 cows instead of the dozen or so that Esh inherited from his father.

His wife, Ruth, has noticed the change, too. Last year, for the first time, they didn't bother to slaughter a pig—though she did make about 150 quarts of apple sauce, and although she still makes all their jams and jellies, she buys in fruit now.

However, the modern world has had only limited impact on the Esh family. There are no tractors to be seen on their land; all the farm machinery is drawn by horses. Although they use a diesel-powered cooling sys-

tem for their milk, their home is as free of electric light as the women's clothes are of buttons.

The Eshs are Amish and, 300 years after the family moved to America, Leroy still talks of Germany as 'the old country'.

Go for a meal with Jonas and Annie King, and they will proudly present a family tree paired with the legend 'Bind us together with love.' Seventeen wooden hearts are inscribed with the names and dates of birth of their grandchildren—blue for the boys and pink for the girls. Four of the hearts are also inscribed with the dates of their death, in spite of the fact that the Amish do not eschew modern medicine and surgery.

Economics is bringing new pressures to bear on the Plain People. Their large families cannot all be supported on the

70 or so acres that is the average Amish farm. Diversification is one way forward; emus have been popping up among the fields of Lancaster county, much as ostriches have appeared in the English home counties. Elks are another favourite; their horns can be sold to the Chinese for traditional medicine.

The Amish may not use electricity or motor cars, but there is nothing 18th century about their business skills. These days they can farm tourists, too. Tourism first 'discovered' the Amish in the 1950s, but it was the film 'Witness', starring Harrison Ford, that put the little town of Intercourse on the map. It is now a long stretch of shops selling jams, pretzels and anything with the word 'handcrafted' in front of it, much of which is made by Amish and some of which is worth buy-

ing.

The Plain People I met in Lancaster county were friendly, cheerful and informal. You will be fed excellently if you eat with the Kings or the Eshs, and they will talk with gentle, open simplicity and honesty about their way of life, culture and religion. After the meal, Annie or Ruth will take you 'just to see' the patchwork panholders and quilts laid out in the spare bedroom and yes, available for purchase.

Tourism is big business in Lancaster county, and everywhere you are urged to 'experience the Amish.' At the multi-media theatre you can watch 'a touching chronicle of a family through the ages, surrounded by five specially designed projection surfaces.' Visit the Amish Village Inc. and you can be guided around a recreation of an Amish farm; contact MTS Heritage Tours for the 'heart of the Amish farmlands' tour.

You have to work a little harder to get past the sanitized, Lancaster county's delightful countryside; gentle hills and open farmland dotted with immaculate farms (the Amish not only seem able to farm without covering the countryside with rusting bits of machinery, but also have an interest in gardening not shared by other Americans).

Litz, Lancaster and Strasburg are pretty towns, with antique and up-market craft shops, and farmer's markets that are surprisingly un-touristy. There are good restaurants, the Hershey chocolate factory, and Route 30, which is littered with discount shopping malls stocking Donna Karen, Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfinger at satisfyingly low prices.

But will the tourists kill the way of life they come to see? Leroy Esh believes not. "This is the way of life we have inherited, and to throw it away would be like throwing away any other inheritance. I would not give up this way; I sort of like it." I can see his point. ■

Financial Times Syndication

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Dome: During restoration efforts, crews will shield works of art such as Constantino Brumidi's fresco 'Apotheosis of George Washington' to protect them from dirt and climate changes. Photo by Ray Lustig.

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THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

A multi-media solution for notebook PC users:

IBM 20X Max CD-ROM drive

A SOLUTION for notebook users, who don't have a CD-ROM drive, has just been introduced by IBM.

IBM's PC Card CD-ROM is a very innovative product, which provides a neat, quick solution to the problem of unable to install a CD-ROM drive into certain models of notebook computers.

It takes the form of a CD-ROM drive, complete with speakers and multi-media components: fixed onto an add-on card. By sliding this card into the notebook PC port, users obtain a fully functional CD-ROM and multi-media facility.

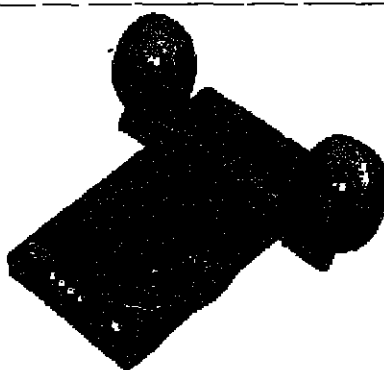
Most notebooks sold three years ago or before are not 'modular' and do not utilize an open design. This means that the installation of a CD-ROM drive is virtually impossible, unless done by external cabling which would be impractical. It would be like taking a CD-ROM out of its bay, and carrying it along with the notebook; in addition you would have kept the CD-ROM stable.

IBM's 20X Max CD-ROM benefits from a TYPE II PC card slot, and frees up a parallel port for other uses. The CD-ROM unit comes with its own drivers, and is fully compatible with Microsoft Windows versions available, (including Windows 3.1, 95 and NT).

The drive measures 5.2 inches wide, 8.1 inches deep,

and 1.3 inches high. It weighs around one pound and thirty ounces and a speaker jack on either side.

The IBM Max 20X can use



three power sources, the AC electricity adapter, a NiCad battery pack or six alkaline AA cells.

To add to all the functionality, the unit incorporates a 'cool' design, and comes in a black casing with much detail being given to the layout of buttons and their colors.

The IBM 20X Max CD-ROM also doubles as an audio CD player, with a full set of controls including backward/forward, play/pause and volume control.

As part of its power-saving features, the drive could be run in 'economy-mode' at only 10X speed (half its actual speed) in order to save on battery life. The speed status of the drive is indicated on a small LCD panel.

Installation is easy. Windows 95 will automatically detect the unit and ask for a driver diskette which is supplied. This means that, in a few minutes, the 20X Max can be up and running.

Although users can't expect the drive to offer 'true' 20X speed at all times, IBM states this as the maximum speed.

Most speed tests have shown that actual speed offered hover at around 10X speed. However, the speed levels depend on factors like CPU load, at the time, and the nature of the data being transferred.

IBM's 20X Max CD-ROM drive represents IBM's flare for creativity and has to be seen to be rightfully admired. It's a long-awaited solution, which should help you hold onto your 'dear-old' notebook. That's worth being pleased about. ■

Civil Status & Passport Department on the Internet

THE WIDESPREAD use of the Internet has prompted Jordan's private and public organizations to begin utilizing this medium as a means of information, promotion and service.

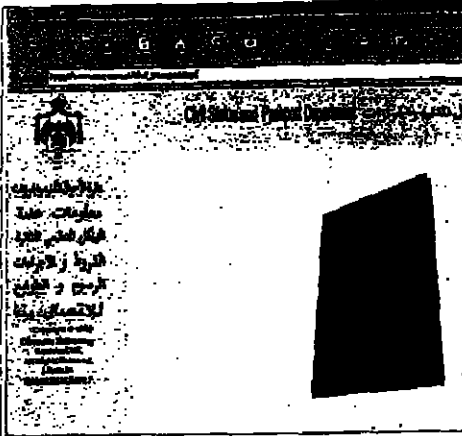
Among the pioneers in Jordan's public sector is the Civil Status & Passport Authority, which has recently announced its official Web site.

The idea is to serve Jordanian citizens, by explaining the procedures and regulations regarding the issuance or renewal of civil status and passport documents.

This move is part of the department's aim to work closer with citizens and continuously develop its civil services.

This site will also serve Jordanians abroad, mainly providing information on changes or developments in procedures.

The site was developed for the Civil Status & Passport Authority by Computer Networking Services (CNS), one of the leading Web site development companies in the country and the operator of Primus bulletin board service (BBS).



To check out the Civil Status & Passport Authority site, go to:
www.cns.com.jo/CivilPassportDept

Windows 98 launch event

IDEAL SYSTEMS Co. held a launch event for Microsoft Windows 98, at the Arman Marriott Hotel on Sunday, 5 July.

The event ran from 9:30 am - 12:00 pm, providing an informative presentation of Microsoft's latest operating system.

The launch was attended by members of the press, major customers and a wide group of Jordanian computing community.

Commenting on the launch of Microsoft Windows 98, officials at Ideal Systems Co. stated that their company had achieved a high status of cooperation with Microsoft, and that the company's position as a senior Microsoft Solution Provider meant that it had to present the latest operating system to its customers.

This is part of Ideal System's commitment to always deliver

the latest software and hardware solutions to the Jordanian market.

Ideal Systems is a Microsoft Solution Provider in Jordan.

The company is part of the Ideal Group of companies, which also includes IdealSoft, Ideal Dimensions and Ideal Tech.

For more information, contact Ideal Group on 5930123. ■

News update

Microsoft pays for right to 'Internet Explorer' name

● Microsoft has recently paid \$5 million dollars to an unheard company called SyNet, which claimed the right to the 'Internet Explorer' trademark. SyNet

had taken its case to court in Chicago, with Microsoft deciding—by the second day—to simply pay a compensation sum to SyNet, thereby closing the case.

According to Microsoft officials, the point was to put the issue behind them, although they were confident that they could have won the case. If a jury decided that SyNet did in fact have the rights to the Explorer trademark, then Microsoft would have been forced to spend around \$30 million to remove the words 'Internet Explorer' from its software packaging and documentation.

This settlement comes at a time when much controversy already surrounds Internet Explorer, which Microsoft recently won a court ruling

regarding, which allowed it to include Explorer in its operating system software; pending court proceedings which will start in September this year.

Novell adopts OSA

● Novell has adopted a new strategy based on 'Open Solutions Architecture (OSA)', which provides an open environment to develop productivity software solutions, by supporting tools and applications provided by other parties. This will allow users easy access to network applications.

By applying OSA, Novell will also lower the cost of purchasing and upgrading software solutions as the open architecture ensures a clear upgrade path. OSA supports Java, C++ and scripting developers.

Cyrix MediaGX leads the change

MASSIVE CHANGES in the price structure of microprocessors has been greatly influenced by chip producer Cyrix, who not only challenged Intel with its Intel-compatible processors, but also pushed the limits of price/performance.

The Cyrix MediaGX is an excellent example, with its ability to deliver 166MHz Pentium performance, adopted by the largest manufacturers in including Compaq. Thanks to the Cyrix MediaGX processor, users can obtain a Pentium PC for around \$400 on the international market. ■



Art

The paintings "The Cabanon de Jourdan" by Paul Cezanne, and "L'Arlesienne" and "The Gardener" both by Vincent Van Gogh, three priceless paintings stolen last May from Rome's Modern Art Museum. The paintings were recovered by police this week.

AFP photo



JAZZ MUSIC

The soulful
Sky of
Mentelbe
stage during the
Blues Summit
at the 3rd
Montreal Jazz
Festival this
week.

AFP photo



Hundreds of people running down a street in the old quarters of Pamplona, during the second "encierro" (running of the bulls) of the San Fermin Festival in northern Spain, held this week.

AFP photo

